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For Profit and Function: Consumption Patterns and Outward Expression of Quakers as Seen through Historical Documentation and 18th Century York County, Virginia Probate Inventories

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FOR PROFIT AND FUNCTION:
CONSUMPTION PATTERNS AND OUTWARD EXPRESSION OF QUAKERS AS
SEEN THROUGH HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION AND 18TH CENTURY YORK
COUNTY, VIRGINIA PROBATE INVENTORIES

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Anthropology

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

by


Darby O'Donnell

2002

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

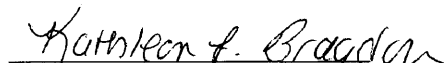
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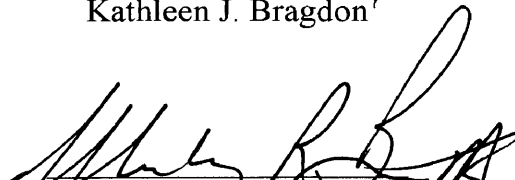


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Approved, March 2002



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ABSTRACT

This thesis will identify York County, Virginia Quaker consumption patterns that both align and deviate from the tenets of Quaker society. This research focuses analysis specifically on elements of functional and conspicuous consumption of Quakers in the late 18th century by comparing the probate inventories of Quakers to Non-Quaker contemporaries. Quakers essentially denounce conspicuous consumption in pursuit of what they believe to be a simpler and thus more virtuous life. By comparing the material items in the probate inventories of Quakers and Non-Quakers, a pattern of material culture unique to each is realized. When compared side by side these patterns will then demonstrate what types of goods Quakers and non-Quakers favor in the late 18th century.

The differences in the material culture of these two groups in regards to conspicuous and functional consumption can be explained through specific aspects of the Quaker culture. Quakers would have chosen to purchase more functional goods than conspicuous goods as their culture tangentially directs. Although Quakers denounced current fashions, they had to maintain a specific style of dress and lifestyle that was contrary to contemporary popular fashions to differentiate them, and they did not live a life of poverty. Monetary gain was considered a reward for one's faith, a divine blessing, so this would not limit their income and purchasing power. Overall, these purchased goods would have been more functional than conspicuous. However, these York County, Virginia Quakers were marginal members of the Quaker faith, both geographically and in their conviction to the de facto guidelines of their society. Some of these Quakers owned slaves and were in possession of conspicuous consumables at the times of their deaths demonstrating a unique deviance within their cultural society.

Quakers are identified as such through their direct indication as Quakers in court records or other primary source documents of York County, Virginia. If not directly identified in these documents as "Quaker", their giving a "solemn affirmation" instead of an oath in court proceedings can identify them. Quakers denounce oaths and their "solemn affirmation" is accepted by the court systems as a suitable substitute.

Because the sample size of Quakers is limited in the primary documents, the number of identifiable Quakers controlled sample size. Two non-Quaker equivalents were chosen for each Quaker for comparison. In order to maintain some control over this experiment, the non-Quaker contemporaries had equivalent estate values and approximate times of death. These controlled variables will assure that time and economic standing will not have an effect on the purchase of material goods. Comparisons between Quakers and non-Quakers were made on both the individual level and as a whole.

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INTRODUCTION

This research thesis concentrates study on a subset of Quakers in York County, Virginia. The Quaker way of life has historically and primarily been associated with Pennsylvania, and with good reason, as many Quakers did in fact settle and perpetuate their way of life in that land. However, on the fringe of the Quaker influence, a small number of Friends resided in Virginia. Their culture did not fully exemplify the tenets of the Quaker lifestyle, thereby demonstrating a complex matrix of traits that set them apart from both their Quaker and non-Quaker brethren. These Quakers of southeastern Virginia were unique in many ways, complementing Quaker ideals with practices contradictory to the Quaker faith. Cultural difference is a reality of humanity, and in this study, it can be seen that a culture does not act predictably or stereotypically although it may associate itself with a social or cultural group. Cultural difference is common with any population of individuals and demonstrates the complexity of humanity within a social realm.

It is my intent to create a portrait of the Quakers of York County, Virginia. I will identify elements of functional and conspicuous consumption of Quakers in the late 18th century by comparing the probate inventories of Quakers and Non-Quakers. Quakers denounce conspicuous consumption in pursuit of what they believe to be a simpler and thus more virtuous life. By comparing the material items in the probate inventories of Quakers and

non-Quakers of York County, Virginia, I hope to find a pattern of material culture unique to each. When compared side by side these patterns will then demonstrate what types of goods Quakers and non-Quakers favor in the 18th century. Then conclusions can be drawn to identify if Quakers of York County, Virginia were acting in accordance to the Quaker way of life.

It is my hypothesis that there will be differences in the material culture of Quakers and non-Quakers in regards to conspicuous and functional consumption. It is my belief that many Quakers would have chosen to purchase more functional goods than conspicuous goods. These functional goods are much like capital goods. Capital goods are items that are an investment for a greater purpose and use in a business, agriculture, or the family. Functional goods serve a purpose, and are not conspicuous. This extrapolation of capital goods was developed specifically for this study. Quakers could justify the purchase of a functional good. The item has a function. It can be used. Moreover, its primary function is not for vanity or demonstration, Quakers being adverse to such goods.

However, there is a question of liminality. Goods can be conspicuous and at the same time functional. How will a Quaker of Virginia contend with an item such as a timepiece? This item was expensive in colonial times due to its complex mechanics, and was a conspicuous item for display by the colonial gentry. However, this item did have a function that could have justified its purchase by a Quaker.

Although Quakers denounced current fashions, they did not live a life of poverty. Monetary gain was considered a reward for one's faith, so this would not limit their

income and purchasing power. In fact, by avoiding conspicuous consumables, alcohol, and firearms, they would be able to reinvest money saved through the avoidance of those items into functional goods. In addition, the avoidance of government work and militia duty because of the Quaker denouncement of firearms and the taking of an oath, respectively, Quakers would have a great deal more independence in America, and more free time. That free time could be reinvested in their businesses or families, thus perpetuating their ability to gain wealth. Wealth was not frowned upon by the Quaker, and was considered a blessing by God for pursuing a “path of light.” However, to achieve great wealth in Virginia through agriculture and other businesses, one must often own and exploit slaves.

Some Quakers in Virginia owned slaves. The Quaker faith spoke out against slavery, but it seems to have fallen on deaf ears in Virginia, and with many Quakers social groups in the south. Owning slaves meant prosperity, and prosperity was a blessing of God for following the “path of light.” This must have proven to be a difficult issue to contend with by many in the Quaker faith. This obvious conundrum of the Quaker allows a glimpse into the Quaker mind of 18th century Virginia. This window into the Quaker self can be better articulated through the quantifiable study of the Quaker probate inventories, lists of goods within the home of a Quaker, lists of all they owned, functional and conspicuous items. A window into a Quaker’s true soul and motivations in life can be seen and interpreted. It is on these pages that one can see how a Quaker in York County, Virginia truly lived.

Researching probate inventories of Quakers in York County, Virginia and comparing those historical documents with non-Quaker York County residents' probate inventories could identify trends in conspicuous consumption and functional consumption of both groups. By looking at modifiers, specific luxury items, as well as functional goods such as livestock, tools, and slaves, a pattern of consumption could be attributed to the Quakers of York County. This pattern could then be compared to non-Quakers of the region, and reflected against the ideals put forth in the tenets of the Quaker faith. An interesting fringe Quaker culture could be identified that provides a glimpse into a fascinating past culture in relative infancy.

It is my contention that many Quakers of 18th century Virginia were not unlike their non-Quaker brethren in their everyday pursuit of wealth. They may have avoided alcohol and firearms more frequently, but when issues came up in regards to wealth and prosperity, the York County Quaker was willing to disregard the tenets of their faith to embrace institutions such as slavery, seeing their success in their business as a blessing from God. Succumbing to temptation on a ghastly, if not just a controversial institution, such as slavery, the wealthier Quaker would probably not take great issue with owning a few conspicuous consumables, items to demonstrate their wealth, success, and in essence, divine blessing. Provided these conspicuous purchases could be justified as functional in some sense, a timepiece does keep time and serves a function just as a candlestick provides light, the Quaker would not be held in *complete* contempt by other Friends.

This thesis will provide a glimpse into a small group of Quakers living in York County, Virginia, comparing them to both Quakers of America though reference in

literature and non-Quaker York County residents of the eighteenth century. It will create a new category in the analysis of probate inventories called *functional consumption*, which is derivative of consumption of capital goods with emphasis on being the antithesis of conspicuous consumption.

In addition, it will demonstrate that, as with all humanity, people who identify themselves with a culture rarely adhere fully to the social guidelines put forth by that culture.



Figure 1. A Quaker Meeting (Hull 1933:45).

The Quakers of York

County, Virginia were different from other Quakers in many ways, but they still held to the Quakers' culturally defined way of life. The mind of the Quaker in York County, Virginia must have pulsed with emotions of guilt and anxiety when faced with issues such as slavery as social pressures and potential for prosperity were at hand. These Quakers had to justify deviance from a way of life in their own minds and in the minds of others.

CHAPTER I

BALLAD AND LAMENTATIONS OF FLEMING BATES

Fleming Bates, mounted atop his young colt, trotted into the town of Williamsburg from his York County dwelling. It was a crisp autumn day. The ground was dry and Williamsburg bustled with activity. As he rode into town, a Williamsburg resident whose name he could not remember called out to him. The resident inquired if Fleming Bates had more cider for sale. Fleming, who operated a mill, acknowledged the man with single nod of affirmation. The man recognized the nod and fell into the background of foot traffic. Fleming continued on his path. Although his facade was silent, calm, collected, and focused, his mind raced.

Fleming Bates was a Quaker, and as a Quaker he respected religion, simplicity, and functionality. Although his life was difficult in the current political situation in the colony of Virginia, he was quite comfortable physically and financially. As a Quaker, he would not take an oath. He would not enter into any contract. He was leery of the governmental structures, and avoided them whenever possible. His Quaker faith, which was a way of life, allowed him to avoid many governmental institutions and related responsibilities because he would not take an oath. This was refreshing in its liberation,

but difficult in dealing with the established society. The masses did not respect the Quaker faith, and saw them as opportunistic. Fleming Bates felt a bit like an outsider, but he enjoyed his independence.

Fleming pulled back on the reins of his colt at a local merchant store. He wanted to purchase a hoe to replace one that had been split by his slave Will while working in the field. Fleming dismounted. His plain drab clothing rippled in the autumn wind. He stood out among the crowd. The style of his clothing was without ornamentation, plain, and simple. Despite the simplicity of his clothes, they were of a quality manufacture rarely seen amongst non-Quakers in Williamsburg. Fleming crossed the threshold of the store and purchased a hoe. As he made his exchange with the shop owner, he never said a word. The shop owner was familiar with Fleming and the local Skimino Quakers and knew that any engagement in tangential conversation with Fleming would result in a stoic blank look, or at best a curt answer. That was an awkward situation in which the shopkeeper just as soon avoid. And the fact that he was spotted by Fleming sipping brandy from a white stoneware mug he had sitting on the back table did not do well for a friendly relationship with the Quaker whose faith barred the consumption of alcohol.

Fleming walked out of the store and mounted his colt. He trotted back home. His mind raced. He was to hold a monthly meeting for the local Quakers of Skimino and knew it would be a trying meeting. He knew he wasn't the most devout Quaker. In the past, Quakers were accepting of those who had strayed slightly. It was completely acceptable. However, the mood among his faith was taking on a new light. There were obvious moves to strengthen the faith by stricter following of its guidelines. Those who

didn't comply were beginning to become alienated and estranged from the faith. Fleming was the overseer of the regular Skimino Quaker meetinghouse, but due to a collapsed roof, he was to hold the meeting at his own home. This would be the first instance in quite some time that the congregation of friends would see his home and his belongings. Belongings that certainly could be considered contrary to the Quaker way of life, the way of life he had dedicated himself to, or at least labeled himself as.

The pit of Fleming Bates's stomach jerked with acid reflux. He was nervous. He kept thinking of his home. He had enough chairs to accommodate his brethren, but had he removed any items of his that would lead to an awkward situation? He had placed all of his glassware in the corner cupboard. Ever since he was scolded by his friend and the Minister of the Skimino Quakers, William Ratcliffe, and his friendship with who was quite taxed as of late, he kept the glassware out of sight in a corner cabinet. Frivolous and conspicuous consumption went against the basis of the Quaker faith, and glassware was certainly a luxury item. He was growing apart from his friend and Minister, William Ratcliffe, but it wasn't just the loss of a friend that made his stomach cramp with anxiety. Quakers were becoming increasingly critical of their fellow brethren. The way of life was becoming more conservative, casting out those who don't follow the faith to the letter.

Fleming lamented on his life, and realized that he was just the type of Quaker that his friends were beginning to feel a strong contempt for. Times were becoming increasingly difficult for himself and others like him, marginal Quakers who enjoyed wealth and began to fall into the fashions of the World. The mood within their faith was

changing, and Fleming was worried that by the end of the year, he would no longer be a Quaker, a Friend.

Fleming peered at his silver watch, checking the time. It would be only a few hours before the Friends would arrive. Fleming shuttered for a moment. His silver watch may also get brought up at the meeting. Fleming justified its purchase with his friend William, but William was seemingly reluctant to accept his justification. In truth, Fleming had bought the watch for stream-lined style, fascinating mechanics, and it made him feel important. Fleming justified the purchase of the watch for its mechanical function. It was a functional item, and functional items were well accepted and often purchased by Quakers. They allowed for self-sufficiency, and provided the independence the Quaker so desperately desired. But the watch was the least of his worries, because Fleming, like many other Quakers in Virginia and North Carolina, owned slaves.

Fleming was well aware of the sympathies of keeping people in bondage. In his own mind, he justified his actions by attributing slavery to the needed upkeep of his grounds and mill. He knew, however, that his excuse wouldn't hold in the eyes of God or in the eyes of the rising conservative population of Quakers. But owning slaves meant that he could protect them, and he would most certainly free them upon his death. Despite his justifications, he knew keeping men and women in bondage was wrong. Considering the slaves that he owned and the luxury items in his home would be under close scrutiny at the meeting, he fully expected to be cast out of the Quaker faith.

He was a better man morally than many men of his value who weren't Quakers, but he realized that many of the things he owned and the actions he'd taken in life were

poor reflections of proper moral behavior. Fleming Bates knew that after tonight, he might become a regular York County resident. He would be committed by oaths, be asked to take up arms in a militia, and become part of the bureaucracy he so despised. He had taken the Quaker faith for granted, enjoying freedom beyond the ordinary farmer or merchant bound by governmental rules and commitment. Fleming feared losing his religion, but feared losing his freedom even more.

Fleming remained a Quaker throughout his entire life. However, it wasn't until his death that he released four of his slaves, Pender, Will, Betty, and Melly from bondage as he requested in his will of 1784. However, they weren't free on the day of his death. Pender would not be given her freedom until the death of Fleming's wife Sarah Bates, her new master. Will would not be released from bondage until the age of 21. Betty and Melly would not be released until the age of 18. All four of Fleming Bates's slaves would remain in the custody of his children and grand children (Wills and Inventories 23:44, Colonial Williamsburg).

Although Flemming Bates was well aware of the concerns Quakers had surrounding the unwilling bondage of men, he chose to follow advice given by George Fox from over a century before Fleming's death. Fox pleaded to his followers to educate their slaves for a Christian life and to "let them go free after a considerable term of year with some repayment for their labor" (Fox 1676:110).

CHAPTER II

HYPOTHESIS

The Quaker religion in colonial America in the eighteenth century was based on lifestyle of simplicity, plainness, modesty, and individualism. The Quakers had separated themselves from the established English church, finding fault and corruption within that religious and political juggernaut. The Quakers based their lives in a religious simplicity and sought to eliminate all things superfluous in language, action, and material goods. They felt that their modest and moral actions were the means of ascension into heaven. Quakers were implored to “let their lives speak,” and that voice should be modest and strictly functional in tone, free of conspicuous consumption.

Although Quakers avoided conspicuous consumption, casting off fashionable and ornate items, they were not dedicated to a life of poverty. They accumulated wealth, and with wealth came material goods. It is my contention that although Quakers avoided conspicuous consumption, they accumulated functional items with more frequency than those who were not of the Quaker faith. Quakers did not spend money on ornate or fashionable items, alcohol, or firearms, and led a frugal lifestyle in that respect. The money saved from frugality and avoidance of vices allowed for greater consumption of

functional goods. Quakers of the eighteenth century had essentially denounced conspicuous consumption in pursuit of what they believe to be a simpler and thus more virtuous life.

With money saved from avoidance of superfluous items, they were able to buy more functional items such as livestock and tools than their non-Quaker neighbors. Quakers could own functional items without feeling that they were violating their faith's decree of modesty. Quaker consumption patterns that demonstrate an avoidance of conspicuous consumption and greater investment in functional items were tested in a comparison of Quaker and non-Quaker probate inventories from York County, Virginia in the eighteenth century.

Quakers created an image or a mask of who they were as a people. "Masks are arrested expressions and admirable echoes of feeling, at once faithful, discreet, and superlative" (Santayana 1922:131). Quakers, as would any social unit that defines itself as a group, created a mask and an echo of feeling to demonstrate who they were as a people and the values that they stood for in life. Quakers stood for modesty, functionality, and "a silence in the flesh of all things." Quakers defined themselves and created the image upon which their culture was interpreted by society. Erving Goffman best explained the general principle outlining the way in which humans view each other in his book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.

If unacquainted with the individual, observers can glean clues from his conduct and appearance which allow them to apply their previous experience with individuals roughly similar to the one before them or, more important, to apply untested stereotypes to him (Goffman 1959:1).

Quakers present who they are, but that image is just a façade. It is my contention that Quakers in York County, Virginia are often at odds with their own image, primarily when it comes to display of wealth and slavery. This could be disruptive to the mask of the Quaker faith. Those who don't comply fully with the guidelines of the Quaker faith are subject to scorn and ridicule by fellow Friends. As Goffman explains, "To ensure that these techniques will be employed, the team will tend to select members who are loyal, disciplined, and circumspect, and to select an audience that is tactful" (Goffman 1959:239). It is not surprising then to understand the actions taken by Quakers in the late 18th century to cleanse their society of those who were not living by the tenets of the faith. Quakers attempted to strengthen their image, to provide more resonance to their "echo of feeling," casting out those who would practice slavery, marry outside the Society of Friends, or demonstrate wealth in a conspicuous manner.

CHAPTER III

THE TENETS OF THE QUAKER FAITH

The Quaker faith began in England. Quakers were considered to be the radicals of the Protestant Reformation. They began as a small group, relatively uncongealed before the founder of the Society of Friends, George Fox, brought a name and formal institution to the Quaker faith. The beginnings of the Society of Friends date to 1644 in Leicestershire. The faith worked its way around England when in 1656 it, “broke forth in America and many other places” (Bell 1976:171).

The founder George Fox has become the ideal image of the Friend. As Bell states, “At a very

George Fox



Figure 2. George Fox (Robert Spence/Friends Library, London).

early age Fox had ‘a gravity and stayedness of mind and spirit not usual in children,’ and when he was eleven ‘knew pureness and righteousness’” (Bell 1976:1). Fox became the rebel leader of what was considered to be a cult of the 17th century.

Quakerism is distinctively the creed of the seventeenth century. Seekers were in revolt against the established order. It gave these seekers what they were seeking for. In theology it was un-Puritan; but in cultus, forms and modes it was more than Puritan. The Quaker was the Puritan of the Puritans (Bell 1976:172).

Quakers were intent to live a life a religious good. They concentrated on the spirit and soul of an individual, and professed to others to allow that soul to interpret the word of God. The cornerstones of Quaker faith revolved around the notion of the spirit. “Inspiration...is the gift of Jehovah to all men who will accept it” (Bell 1976:172). In addition to inspiration, was the notion of the “Inner Light” and the “Path of Light.” The “Inner Light” is, “the heavenly guide given directly to inform or illuminate individual conscience” (Bell 1976:172). Quakers believed in the goodness of man, that goodness was in all men, and if all men acted in the path of Light, then there would be no need for civil institutions and government for man would regulate his own actions as he or she lived by the word of God in the pursuit of spiritual good.

Bearing these cornerstones of the Quaker faith in mind, there are four basic tenets of the Society of Friends in which they live their daily lives. These principles define their lifestyle, cultural view, worldview, and vision of the future.

The first principle of the Quaker faith is the progression towards the dissolution of civil government. “If all men were to become real Christians, civil government would

become less necessary. As there would be then no offences, there would be no need of magistracy or of punishment” (Bell 1976:200). In addition, Quakers felt that government had no place to act punitively or in any way against religion. This view probably stemmed from the persecutions that Quakers suffered from early in the development of their “radical” religion.

The second principle warns against taking an oath. For the Quaker, an oath is somewhat irrelevant. “It is an old saying among Quaker writers, that ‘truth was before all oaths.’ By this they mean, there was a time when men’s words were received as truths without the intervention of an oath” (Bell 1976:204). Truth and simplicity can be seen in this tenet of the faith of the Quaker. There is no need for an oath, for all men should speak the truth if following the path of light.

The third principle of the Society of Friends is that war, hostility towards others, and bearing arms is unjust. “Christianity required a greater perfection of the human character than under the law. Men were not only not to kill, but not even to cherish the passion of revenge” (Bell 1976:206). Men were to turn the other cheek if assaulted, however, if all men led lives devoted to the scriptures then there would certainly be no assault on any man in the first place.

The fourth principle of the Society of Friends dealt with the pecuniary maintenance of a gospel ministry. Those who preached the word were not to be supported monetarily from a general fund. Ideally, those members of society would support the men and women who preached the scriptures. The Quakers adopted this tenet from Jesus Christ where,

On the erection of his gospel ministry, gave rules to his disciples how they were to conduct themselves... He enjoined the twelve, before he sent them on this errand, as we collect from St. Matthew and St. Luke, that, “as they had received freely, so they were to give freely; that they were to provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in their purses, nor scrip, nor other things for their journey...” (Bell 1976:212).

Quakers lived by the scriptures, and sought to lead society into a life of truth, light, and goodness as put forth in the Bible. This was the reason that the Quakers considered themselves a society and often disregarded terms like religion. They were exemplifying the path on which all humans should follow.

“...let our moderation and prudence, as well as truth and justice, appear to all men, and in all things, in trading and commerce, in speech and communication, in eating and drinking, in habit and furniture; and, through all, in a meek, lowly, quiet spirit...1731. P.E.” (Friends Society of London 1834:38).

Quakers professed that they were not a different Christian religion; they were just a people conforming to and operating under the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Bible.

CHAPTER IV

PLIGHT OF THE QUAKER

Quakers had broken from the established church in England. “As dissenters from the established church, Quakers were actively persecuted and humiliated in many localities, including York County [Virginia]” (McCartney 1973:1). Although Quakers within the colonies were actively discriminated against by their English neighbors,

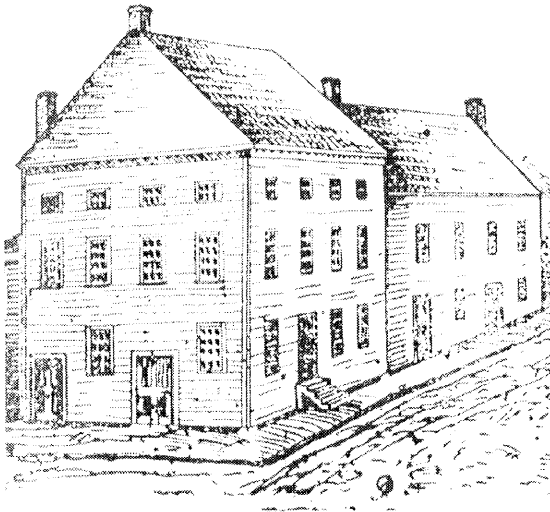


Figure 3. Virginia's Old Capitol in Richmond (*Old Prints* by Alexander W. Weddell)

Quakers in Virginia experienced more leniency and tolerance beginning in 1689 with the enactment of the Toleration Act by Governor Bushrod (McCartney 1973:1). For comparison, “[in] 1660, Sandwich, Massachusetts as a town became sympathetic to Quakerism despite pressure from England” (Worrall 1986a:73).

Quakers were continually at odds with the colonial governments because of two pillars within their faith. Quakers would

not take an oath, nor would they bear arms. “Failure to attend militia musters brought substantial fines and ostracism, and refusal to take oaths of loyalty prevented Quakers from holding office” (Brown 1936:13). By not taking up arms or an oath of allegiance, Quakers were held in high suspicion, prompting action by their non-Quaker contemporaries during the revolution. Fearing information leaks during the revolution from Quakers who would not take sides,

In Virginia and New Hampshire the authorities implemented the advice of Congress concerning the records of Friends Meetings. The Virginia Council requested the Governor to order the magistrates of Henrico, Loudon, Hanover, Nansemond, and any other counties where there were Quaker Meetings, to seize their records and arrest any persons responsible for treasonable activities (Mekeel 1996).

Quakers understood reform, but denounced war. This was a difficult issue for the Society of Friends. “Quakerism was caught between the ideal of reforming the world and the desire to escape from the world to build a holy community” (Frost 1973:188).

Despite strong Quaker unity, some Quakers did support the war and were disowned from the Society, and some of those banished few formed their own societies with rules based on Quaker ideals. “A handful of Friends like Betsy Ross and General Greene, who were disowned for supporting the war, formed a society of their own, calling themselves Free Quakers” (Newman 1972). Quakerism was very clear on disownment during the eighteenth century, it made sure that the sect remained strong and staunch in their tenets. “The effectiveness of the whole system in perpetuation of Quakerism depended upon the maintenance of discipline” (Marietta 1974).

Quakers not only lived lives of functionality and plainness, but of morality as well. Quakers were to demonstrate functionality, simplicity, and plainness in all aspects of their lives as they were told, “let your words be few.”

Accordingly, speaking became a metaphor for all human action-“let your lives speak”-which was thereby encompassed by the same moral rules that governed verbal activity, that is the stripping away of superfluity and carnal indulgence and the maintenance of “silence” of the flesh in all things (Bauman 1983:31).

This “silence of the flesh” was extended to include all outward appearance.

“We are told with truth, that meekness and modesty are the rich and charming attire of the soul: and the plainer the dress, the more distinctly, and with greater luster, their beauty shines” (Penn 1693:32) (Davies 2000:55). Personal outward appearance was to be quite modest as told by George Fox, a founder of Quakerism.

Keep out of the vain fashions of the world; let not your eyes, and minds, and spirits run after every fashion...And Friends that see the world so often after fashions, if you follow them, and run into them, in that ye cannot judge the world, but the world will rather judge you. Therefore, keep in all modesty and plainness (Frost 1973:194).

This came to include furnishings and other material goods as well.

That all should keep to the plainest in their household stuffe and furniture both riding and otherwise, avoiding in particular striped or flowered bed or window hangings of divers colours and quilt counterpaines and table clothes of like gaudy colors likewise vallants and fringes and that side saddles and others be plaine without fringes and bridles without needless buckles and bosses (Minutes of Yearly Meeting in Brown 1987:263).

Any type of item that could be found in a household that contained an element that was decorative and not functional was considered to be contrary to the views of the Quaker faith. However, if for some reason a Quaker was to have an item with a decorative element, it was to be contained, so as not to be seen. “That all Friends that have vessells of silver do not set them up in any Publick Placee nor no other Flowered painted vessels, seeming more to be seen than otherwise” (Minutes of Yearly Meeting in Brown 1987:264). Superfluous items were to be avoided. However, in the event of Quaker ownership of a superfluous item, it was to be kept away from public eyes.

Quakers were to maintain a life that demonstrated plainness, functionality, and efficiency. “The most common metaphor employed by the Quakers for indwelling spirit of God was –and has remained—the Inward Light” (Bauman 1983:24). The Inward Light was a Godly lifestyle. “Contemporaries were aware that Quaker dress reflected an important part of Quaker comportment in the world and was part of a wider set of symbols and behavior regarding Quaker self-presentation” (Davies 2000:55).

Quakers acted out against society, finding much fault and corruption in its workings. Quaker martyr James Parnel lamented,

“And here is the ground of the world’s superiority, nobility, gentility, honour, breeding and manners; and here they Lord over one another by their corrupt wills; and here is the ground of all tyranny and oppression, rackings and taxings, and wars, and imprisonments, and envy, and murder, and the persecution of the righteous; all arise from proud Lucifer, the lust in man, who would be honoured; and all this is in the fall, and under the curse” (Bauman 1983:56).

Society's aristocracy and religious community saw the Quaker sect as a threat as they openly spoke against the status quo, especially non-Quaker Christians. In 1731, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel's Jared Westmore attacked Quakerism. "It [Quakerism] consists of a series of charges concerning Friends, namely, that thy were debauched, lewd, and dishonest. To Westmore the height of their debauchery consisted of the denial of the sacraments of baptism and communion" (Worrall 1995:14). Eventually, as Quakerism became more accepted in society, Quakers themselves made compromises in order to voice they opinions and defend themselves in politics and the courts. This is seen especially in their later use of legal counsel.

Friends willingness to utilized legal counsel on a broad scale was a decisive step for a group which had generally condemned the legal profession. In effect, the Quakers had undergone a metamorphosis from a radical sect ostensibly contemptuous of legal procedure into one which employed those procedures to thwart their opponents and to procure their own freedom, although without sacrificing their basic principles (Hurle 1986:17).

Despite these small compromises in time, Quakers held to their beliefs. These beliefs are summed up concisely in this passage from the minutes of the Friends Society of London from 1688.

We earnestly desire that friends every where be put in mind to keep under the leadings and guidance of the Spirit of Truth in their outward habits and fashions thereof; not suffering the spirit of the world to get over them, in a lust to be like unto it in things useless and superfluous; lest it prevail upon them, by giving a little way to it, till it leads them from the simplicity and plainness that become the Gospel; and so from one vain liberty to another, till they come to lose the blessed liberty that is in Christ; into which they were in measure redeemed; and fall back into the

bondage of the world's spirit, and grow up into the liberty of the flesh with the lust and concupiscence thereof; and so lose both their name and place in the truth, as too many have done. 1688. P.E. (Friends Society of London 1834:36).

CHAPTER V

THE STYLE AND FASHION OF THE QUAKER

Quaker dress set the Friends apart from the rest of society and its wayward populous. “Distinctive dress became a kind of silent witness. It tended to weld Friends together, and to promote a group spirit in a hostile world” (Hinshaw 1984:103). Dress served both as a means to demonstrate devotion to the Quaker faith, but also would have been a deterrent for a Quaker individual considering entering into a place or action of ill repute. “This badge of separation may have kept many individuals from being seen in unwholesome places and from keeping unsavory company. A great many temptations were thus easily avoided” (Hinshaw 1984:103).

Plainness in dress was a symbol. It was a symbol of Quakerism that served to remind the individual, the Quaker society, and the non-Quaker society. Elizabeth Sampson Ashbridge was an eighteenth century female Quaker minister who realized the symbolic power of clothing for Quakers and women. “[Ashbridge] recognized that her dress carried enormous symbolic power and that clothing could instantly mark a woman as different” (Levenduski 1996:203). Ashbridge was more successful as a Quaker minister and was better accepted by her Quaker contemporaries once she fully converted to the dress of a Quaker.

“A convert, Ashbridge found alignment once she converted to Quaker dress” (Levenduski 1996:203). Fully assimilated in the symbolic dress of the Quaker, Ashbridge found credibility and her devotion to the sect was not called into question.

Plainness also brought on scrutiny and harsh reactions by non-Quaker contemporaries. This is illustrated clearly in Thomas Chalkey’s journal as he recollects the trials he went through as a Quaker child. “I went by myself to the school; and many and various were the exercises I went through, by beatings and stoning along the streets, being distinguished to the people by the badge of plainness which my parents put upon me” (Chalkey 1808:1).

Not all Quakers adopted a plain form of dress. Many Quakers strayed from this practice, even if only slightly. More staunch Friends did take notice of their fellow Friends’ shortcomings such as Thomas Ellwood, who stated,

It hath come to pass that there is scarce a new Fashion comes up, or fantastic Cut invented, but some one or other that professes Truth, is ready with the foremost to run into it...Let every one examine himself that this Achan, with his Babylonish garment, may be found out and cast out (Ellwood 1765:342).

Outward appearance was a reflection of the self and a devotion to a Christian way of life. A Quaker woman from the 18th century writes of children’s lack of plainness and mentions calico, a modifier tracked in this study, with exclamatory contempt. She laments,

Oh, how I have grieved this day because of this playing of ball and this fishing [on Saturday]...it never was harder to bring up children to be good in any age of the world than it is now...Oh, the fashions and running into them! The

young men wearing their hats set [turned] up behind...the girls...have their necks set off with a black ribbon, a sorrowful sight indeed!...So much excess of tobacco, and tea is as bad...and there is the calico! We pretend to go in a plain dress and plain speech: but where is our plainness?...It fills me with sorrow when I see people so full of laugh and talk...(Fox 1941:145).

Quakers avoided current fashion and otherwise gaudy material goods. Although they would avoid the current fashions of the time, they would partake in consumption of goods that had been phased out by a more recent trend in fashion.

It may be set down as a safe rule, in seeking for a Quaker style or custom at any given time, to take the worldly fashion or habit of the period preceding. When the mode changes, and a style is dropped, the Quaker will be found just ready to adopt it, having by that time become habituated to its use (Gummere 1901:183).

Quakers would have donned clothing or purchased goods of a fashion past its time.

Couple this with the fact that Quakers would have owned functional items that would have been perhaps sturdy or well worn, they are more apt to have their goods considered “old” by the person or persons estimating their estates.

Quakers may have had a retro look in the way of “fashion”, but they also wore fine materials, although plain. Well-made clothes of fine, but not flashy, textiles would have also characterized the Quaker mode of dress. This can be seen in a passage from the journal of the Quaker William Reckitt. After a French ship overtook the English ship that Reckitt was on, the French sailors relieved him of some of his belongings and took notice of his clothing.

Whilst we were at meat, some of them turned up my coat laps, and examined what my clothes were made of as well

as they could, and commended them for being so good. They seemed not to take so much notice of any as they did me; often pointing at me, saying I was a minister, a priest (Reckitt 1989:16).

Some Quakers took notice of their own compulsiveness towards personal fashion, their fashion being plainness. A few friends began to realize that they were just as vigilant in keeping with a standard style of plainness as the remainder of society was in keeping with the newest fashions from overseas. A Quaker woman vocalizes this realization, “It’s a dangerous thing to lead young Friends much into the observation of outward things, which may be easily done; for they can soon get into an outward garb, to be all alike outwardly; but this will not make them true Christians” (Fox 1710:534). Despite these concerns, Quakers maintained their socially identifying garb in order to isolate and define themselves as a people. As Elbert Hubbard stated,

Quakerism is a protest against an idle, vain, voluptuous and selfish life. It is the natural recoil from insincerity and vanity...which causes men and women to “come out” and stand firm for plain living and high thinking (Hubbard 1928:197).

Quakers felt that by succumbing to the superfluous customs and vanities of society, one’s soul would become corrupted like the current society. Thomas Chalkey cites an example of this with the symbolic story of a woman whose life was on trial for keeping bad company. “I knew her when she wore a necklace of gold chains, though now she wore iron ones” (Chalkey 1808:73).

Quakers were to live modest and plain lives, but did not take vows of poverty. Quakers would not take an oath or bear arms, which essentially eliminated them from

public office and militia duty. Because of this, many Quakers became planters or merchants. These professions allowed them to accumulate wealth. Many non-Quakers took notice of this Quaker skill of frugality and industriousness in their professions, as can be seen in this derogatory comment from 1684.

They [Quakers] are generally Merchants and Mechanicks, and are observed to be very punctual in their dealings, Men o few Words in a Bargain, modest and compos'd in their Department, temperate in their Lives and using greate Frugality in or Pains to increase their Wealth; and so subtle and inventive, that they would if possible, extract Gold out of Ashes (Marana 1734:17).

The Quaker faith was not a series of doctrines, but a way of life. They lived plain, modest, individual, and functional lives that were not restricted by a commitment to poverty. This was done to essentially separate them from what they considered to be a self-indulgent corrupt world.

There is no doubt that, by adopting distinctive forms of speech and interpersonal comportment, early Quakers not only sought to distinguish themselves from their contemporaries, they used these devices rhetorically to actively challenge the existing social order (Bauman 1983:61).

Resisting the social order through simplicity and functionality also brought success in business due to frugality. Success in business was a reward for living “in the Light.” Quakers felt profit and success in business validated their way of life to the rest of the society, as this wealth was a Godly blessing.

CHAPTER VI

WEALTH, BUSINESS, AND DIVINE BLESSING

Quakers were frugal and would often reinvest profits into their businesses or in functional items. Success in business was often considered a sign from the Lord that the Quaker was on the path of “Light.”

If one kept one’s inner eye single to the Lord, and labored diligently in one’s calling, one could expect that God would show His favor by adding his blessing in the form of material prosperity (Logan 1717:37).

Quakers epitomized the capitalist of the free market economy that would later be a hallmark of American society. “True Godliness don’t turn Men out of the World, but enables them to live better in it” (Penn 1669:295-296) (Tolles 1948:53).

Quaker success came with frugality and moderation. Interestingly enough, Benjamin Franklin worked for a Quaker merchant by the name of Thomas Denham (Tolles 1960:57). Perhaps this experience contributed to some of the economic aspects of our blossoming nation, and our emphasis on individualism and industriousness.

Whereas non-Quakers may have begun the process of conspicuous consumption in order to display their status as wealthy members of society, Quakers would have been

more likely to purchase more functional items that would not violate their modest lifestyle and further emphasize their faith's devotion to individualism.

All friends everywhere be very careful to avoid all inordinate pursuits after the things of this world, by such ways and means as depend too much upon the uncertain probabilities of hazardous enterprises; but rather labor to content themselves with such a plain way and manner of living, as is most agreeable to the self-denying principle of truth we profess (Taken from Brown 1987:292).

“Labor to content themselves” would have been a functional action, and ownership of functional items such as livestock and tools would have been more prevalent and conspicuous consumption less prevalent than a non-Quaker whose estate was of the same value. As Tolles states, “Quaker ideas were not anti-esthetic at all, but reflected an ideal of functional simplicity” (Tolles 1960:76).

Divine Blessing meant wealth. In order to achieve that wealth and divine blessing, Quakers took up functional trades. The Quakers worked at their trades as they symbolically lived their lives. They worked with diligence, sincerity, functionality, efficiency, and effectiveness. They did not waste their breath, their time, or their money, and because of this, they were successful and gained a reputation for monetary success in business. Thomas Chalkey comments on his diligence and business success in advice to others. “After these several Journey's were over...I was some Time at home, and followed my Business with Diligence and Industry, and throve in the Things of the World, the Lord adding a Blessing to my Labour” (Chalkey 1749:52) (Tolles 1948:56).

Quaker ideals were manifest in their business practices. These applied ideals provided Quakers with success, providing further resolve to the Quaker that their lifestyle was more of an ideal, albeit a Christian ideal.

It is interesting to observe that Quaker principle concerning fixed and fair prices was eminently successful, bringing Friends considerable economic success, and thus conferring “credit upon the account of Truth” (Rigge 1678:3; Barclay 1841:367; Caton 1671:27; Edmondson 1820:50; Fox 1831, 7: 301-302). This success in turn helped to vindicate Friends’ principles, offsetting to a degree the severe persecution occasioned by the related testimony against oaths (Bauman 1983:96).

Quaker silence and honesty allowed the Quaker business person to maximize profits. “If thou finds out a Place where they Sell cheap, keep it to thy Self, for if thou Ships off Goods cheaper than others, it will increase Business” (Reynell 1743) (Tolles 1948:60). Quakers could avoid spreading information on cheaper goods by keeping the information to themselves, considering it superfluous speech. Honesty also allowed for greater profit as it eliminated bargaining. “Quakers required strict honesty in business, including giving one fixed price instead of haggling” (Moore 2000:119).

Quaker would not take oaths. Thereby, they would not get into debts through institutions that would require an oath or contract. If Quakers did make a promise, they would certainly keep it. Quakers planned their businesses accordingly with efficiency, self-sufficiency, and determination. The Friends Society of New England brought this point forward in 1737.

Advised that a conscientious care dwell on all our minds, not only to be just in our trade and dealing, neither deceiving the buyer in what we sell, nor falsifying the balances; but that we keep to our promises, and pay our debts in due time; not exceeding our circumstances or reasonable expectations in our way of living, nor engaging in hazardous things more out of vanity than necessity...1737” (Friends Society of New England 1849:144).

Quakers also had a sense of unity amongst themselves. They were dedicated to Christianity, the Quaker way, and the education of that plain, functional, and profitable lifestyle. Quakers taught their own and perpetuated their sect’s devotion through teachings and examples. The same dedication and education to promote unity carried over into Quaker business in preferences towards apprentices.

“And it is recommended to all friends who take apprentices, to seek for and give preference to our own members, and to be moderate in their terms, that the children of the poorer sort in an especial manner may be brought up to such trades and business as may, with the Lord’s blessing on their prudence and industry, procure for them such a living as will be to their comfort and the reputation of society” (Friends Society of New England 1849:112).

Successful wealthy Quaker business persons were to instruct other Quakers in their trades before non-Quakers. Moreover, by educating poorer Quakers in a successful trade, the poorer Quakers could become monetary successful and bring greater validation to Quakerism as a whole.

Although many Quakers had found a formula in their religion for wealth, they were to be cautious not to flaunt their wealth or lose track of their Quaker beliefs.

Despite peer pressures, many Quakers did stray from the Quaker ideal, and that can be seen in Quaker and non-Quaker observations.

“Wealthy Quakers were expected not to be ostentatious” (Moore 2000:120).

However, many seemed to slowly become swooned in by social acceptance of non-Quaker hierarchical society, prompting Quaker responses.

“Their fathers came into the country and bought large tracts of land for a trifle; their sons found large estates come into their possession, and a profession of religion which was partly national, which descended like a patrimony from their fathers, and cost a little. They settled in ease and affluence, and whilst they made the barren wilderness a fruitful field, suffered the plantation of God to be as a field uncultivated, and a desert...A people who had thus beat their swords into plowshares with the bent of their spirits to this world, could not instruct their offspring in the statutes they had themselves forgotten” (Bacon 1963:63).

Many Quakers fell from grace. “The early settlers found the way to worldly wealth wide open to them, and many followed it where it led. In the wake of the increase of worldly riches and political power there followed, almost inevitably, a decline from the early Quaker ideal” (Bauman 1971:40). Quaker success in business, whether or not it entailed a fall from grace or not, was not overlooked by those of the non-Quaker society. “As to these modern Seducers, they are not Men of Arms but a herd of silly insignificant People, aiming rather to heap up Riches in Obscurity, than to acquire a Fame by a heroick Undertaking” (Marana 1734:17) (Tolles 1948:47).

There were many Quakers who maintained a path in the Divine Light when it came to business and wealth, and there were many Quakers who did not. In either case, Quaker attitudes were considered “Caesarist” to many in lieu of their wealth and business

practices (Ferguson 1995). Although wealth was a driving factor for many Friends, as it was considered divine blessing and evidence of the validity of their sect, there were those who took a middle ground on the issue like Christopher Story who lamented in 1726,

About this Time, my Heart came to be more and more opened, and I saw the Danger of Poverty and Riches, and at a certain Time, I retired, and the Saying of the Wiseman came into my Remembrance, and I prayed to the Lord, to give me neither Poverty nor Riches, for I saw there was Danger on both Hands. (Story 1726:8) (Brinton 1972:48).

CHAPTER VII

SLAVERY AND THE QUAKER

Slavery is an interesting issue that Quakers had to grapple with. Quakers in America did

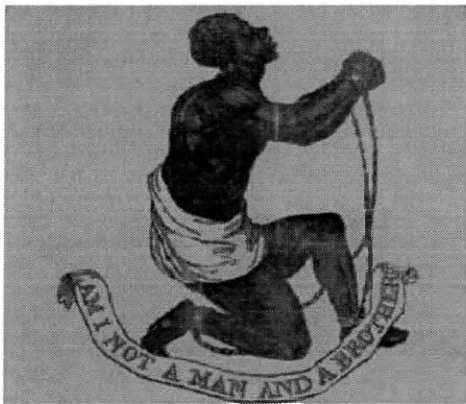


Figure 4. Anti-slavery Image
From a Broadside (www.loc.gov).

not take a firm stand on slavery until late in the eighteenth century. “The consequences of owning human property were not clear to them” (Densmore et al. 1995:65). Many Quaker planters would have needed slaves to continue with agricultural success.

Slaves did serve a functional purpose for a business, and perhaps the immorality of participating in the

trade of humans was overlooked in lieu of business success.

“If one kept one’s inner eye single to the Lord and labored diligently in one’s calling, one could expect that God would show His favor by adding His blessing in the form of material prosperity. And conversely, business success could be regarded as a visible sign that one was indeed living “in the Light” (Tolles 1948:56).

Quakers of York County, Virginia did own slaves, and profit would be what controlled those Quakers’ decision to own slaves. Profit meant divine blessing from acting with sincerity and functionality in all manner of business and behavior.

William Reckitt traveled throughout the east coast of America and across the Atlantic Ocean, recording his experiences in spreading the Quaker way of life. From 1764 through 1765, he traveled to North Carolina via Virginia, and recorded some experiences of note for this study. He laments on his meetings in Virginia,

In Virginia some of the Meetings revealed a poor state of affairs. At Smiths' Creek, for instance, "(We) then rode about sixty miles to John Douglass's, and had a meeting with a few people, who seemed a stupid and senseless about religion, as their Negroes whom they hold in slavery", and then again, "We were at Fort Creek; the meeting was made up pretty much of other people, and in the evening we had Friends together at our lodgings, where William had an open time, and I endeavoured to stir them up to a concern for the support of Truth's Testimony in several particulars (Reckitt 1989:46).

William Reckitt goes on to question and scold the actions of the Virginia Quakers he came across, but succumbs to their pleasant treatment of him,

At Curles in Southern Virginia they "lodged at a friend's house where riches, Negroes and grandeur abound, which makes very poor fare for a Christian mind; but he was hospitable and kind to us" (Reckett 1989:46).

This breakdown to pleasantries by William Reckitt may have summed up the approach taken by the Old Guard of the Quaker faith in regards to slavery and demonstration of wealth. It would be scolded, but those members would still be allowed to maintain their status as Friends. Although slavery was not overlooked, the slave owning Quakers seem to have suffered only verbal warnings, which certainly did not stop them from exploiting human beings. This stance is further illustrated through a guideline set forth by the Friends Society of New England in 1773,

It is recommended to friends who have slaves in possession, to treat them with tenderness, impress God's fear in their minds, promote their attending places of religious worship, and give those that are young, at least, so much learning that they may be capable of reading...1773" (Friends Society of New England 1849:104).

Slavery was tolerated, so long as the enslaved were treated decently and a religious and Christian lifestyle was impressed upon them.

Although William Reckitt was not pleased by much of what he saw in his slave-holding Quaker brethren in Virginia, there were those Virginians who still held the ideals of the Quaker faith as seen in this comment by Reckitt from 1757,

In Virginia he met with another Quaker Minister, Samuel Spavold, 'who likewise was much engaged in the service of Truth. His labour of love in the work of the gospel was indeed great in this part of the world; those of other societies being much reached by his ministry. We were truly glad to see each other; for as iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the face of a man his friend' (Reckitt 1989:27)

The Quaker way of life arrived in Virginia quite early in the American scheme. George Fox toured Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina in the 1660s. He came upon both bad weather and bad Quaker practices. Worrall paraphrases George Fox's comments of his visit to Norfolk in the 1660s,

The zeal of the Norfolk Quakers, bright in the early 1660s, was pretty well quenched by the time of Fox's visit. Most people who came to the meetings were "of the world"; and among these who were or had been Quakers, George found some "bad walkers and talkers." (Worrall 1994:60)

"During the last week of his stay, Fox spent time and pains correcting evils that had come into the Society and in "working down bad spirits that had got up in some" (Bell 1976:175).

Beyond the poor walkers and talkers who may have dressed in calico, floral patterns, or other trendy garb and took part in superfluous conversation, there was an issue, which had much deeper moral implications, slavery. Slavery was a long-standing institution in America; it brought wealth and prosperity to the land and the people who owned it. However, the institution of slavery was looked upon with contempt by many moralists of the time, including Quakers. In the 1740's a Virginia Quaker observed of slavery,

Where the masters bore a good share of the burthen, and lived frugally, so that their servants were well provided for, and their labor moderate, I felt more easy; but...the white people and their children so generally living without much labor, was frequently the subject of my serious thoughts. I saw...so many vices and corruptions increased by this trade and way of life, that it appeared to me as a dark gloominess hanging over the land; and though many now willingly run into it, yet in future the consequence will be grievous to posterity. (Cady 1963:79)

This Quaker sympathy for those in bondage extended to the Native Americans as well, who were being mistreated by an ever encroaching and assimilating European colonial juggernaut. Many non-Quakers felt that the Quakers were merely exploiting the natives for their own gain, and viewed Quaker sympathy with a leery eye. The frugal nature of the Quaker was commonly talked about and witnessed in the 18th century, and their monetary success was viewed by their own society as the Divine's blessing for duly following the path of Light. As one can imagine, suspicions of the individual Quaker's true motivations by many non-Quakers began to surface. On Quaker sympathy towards the natives in Hopewell, Virginia, "Such Quaker tenderness for Indians was despised by

the back country Scotch-Irish who opined that the Friends were only kind to the Indians in order to make money from them” (Worrall 1994:198). Many believed that Quakers in Virginia and Quakers beyond Virginia would exploit those down trodden peoples such as slaves and Native Americans strictly for gain, just as non-Quakers would.

In fact, Quakers did own slaves. They took part in a vile institution of human bondage in order to receive larger monetary gains. Although some Quakers in Virginia did own slaves, they often voiced opinions on the treatment of slaves. When paranoia surrounding Negro assemblies engulfed the colony, the Quaker spoke out in favor of slave freedoms. When a plea came out by the non-Quaker society to patrol the land for assemblies of Negroes and slaves that are gathered, a Virginia Quaker took opposition,

“...The general plea and argument used by our adversaries...is that, as the intent of the law is for the country’s preservation in case the blacks should make any attempt against it, and as many of us having Negroes ought—as they say—be helpful and assistant to defend the country against any attempt of that nature” (Haverford Quaker Manuscript 1116) (Worrall 1994:146).

The reasons for this argument were two-fold, not only did the Quakers have a watered down moral opposition to the plea to break up assemblies, but they also had a contempt for civil government, which they thought of as unnecessary if all men followed the path of Light.

The Quaker also spoke out strongly for the abolition of slavery, even if it may have fallen on deaf ears by some of those in their own society. One Quaker spoke to his Friends who owned slaves and warned them of the consequences. “...The slave-owning,

as a flagrant violation of the divinely ordained brotherhood of man, might bring God's wrath down on Friends for tolerating it" (James 1963:132).

Despite strong opposition to slavery, most Quakers fell into a middle ground on the issue, including founder George Fox who told his people, "You should preach Christ to the Ethiopians that are in your families, that so they may be free men indeed and be tender of them and walk in love, that of God in their hearts" (Gospel Family Order 1701:15) (Cadbury 1972:165). Even Fox would not denounce slavery fully, as it allowed many of the Quaker people to attain greater profits and wealth, symbols of divine blessing for leading a Christian lifestyle. Although Quakers did not discount slavery from their sect, they did value freedom and equality, and extended those views to slaves in part. "[Postulating] liberty as their natural right. It followed that Quakers should train their slaves avowedly for participation in society as freeman... Since freedom was a natural right, a Quaker did not need to feel qualms about letting his slaves loose to sin; he did right to free them if he had done his best to prepare them 'to make a proper use of their Liberty'" (James 1963:134). Most Quakers in Virginia probably felt content with this middle ground, it allowed them to keep slaves and attain wealth, and it would relieve their spirits in some way to allow their slaves to go free at some point, probably at the Quaker master's death.

CHAPTER VIII

FUNCTIONALITY OF SPEECH AND ACTION

George Fox once asked of his people, “Have you not trimmed your outsides?” (Fox 1831). Fox encouraged Friends to be plain and functional in all manner of outward expression. Speech, action, and dress are all elements of the self that are expressed and demonstrated to the world outside of the individual. To the Quaker, dress, speech, and action had to be trimmed, eliminating frivolity from all things demonstrated to the general populous. In this vein, Quakers maintained a functional, sincere, and profitable lifestyle.

Nothing was to be wasted in material culture, which included frivolous goods. In speech, only words needed to conduct day-to-day business were to be used. Only functional words were to be spoken. Only sincere words were to be spoken. No frivolous speech was to be uttered. Frivolous speech was considered wasted breath. Wasted breath meant wasted resources and thereby less profit, and profit was demonstration of divine blessing and a path in the Light. Controlled outward expression not only served as demonstration and practice of the Quaker sect, but also served as a means of separation and unification in the general society. “Silence for the Quakers, was not an end in itself,

but a means to the attainment of the defining spiritual experience of early Quakerism, the direct personal experience of the spirit of God within oneself” (Bauman 1983:23).

The body is a vessel for expression of the self and one’s social relationships.

“The body is the intermediary between the individual and society and thus a critical factor in how people seek to identify themselves to others” (Davies 2000:43). The actions that the Quakers took in speech and body language set them apart from society, strengthening their own convictions, unifying themselves as a sect, and removing themselves from the general society and the hierarchies that came with it.

The principle method of acknowledging a person’s status in daily life was through the medium of the physical body. The garments which clothed the human form, modes of address and terminology, bodily gestures such as a kiss, bow, embrace, or curtsy, and even the human carriage itself constituted elaborate signals which imparted important information about a person’s position in the social hierarchy. Differences in social standing were thereby more easily recognized and the appropriate formalities executed (Davies 2000: 44).



Figure 5. From William Jones, *Work for a Cooper* (1679), frontpiece. (Taken from Davies 2000:47).

This removal and dismissal of hierarchical customs, such as addressing people with titles suited to their status or removing one’s hat in church and indoors, was considered rude by the general populous. It was considered even more abominable by the aristocracy who saw the Quakers actively disregarding the social structure that gave the elites their power and status. In this regard, Quaker speech and

action was considered threatening to an established social system.

The Quaker acted out against society, and primarily against behavior that would reinforce elite social standing. Quakers abstained from, “gay clothes, whatsoever encouraged vanity, gestures, motions, salutations, or obsequious practices which in society were considered good manners or breeding” (Crouch 1712: 9, 10, 153).

Quaker prohibitions regarding dress were disapproved of by others in part because they violated important social conventions. At this time the quality and style of clothes were important indicators of occupation and social position. The dress of aristocracy, clergy, lawyers, and merchants were significantly different, the purpose being that gradations of social status could thus be recognized and the appropriate respect paid. (Breward 1995:26-27).

The social elites and other operatives of a set social hierarchy need to experience the reinforcement of their position within the society through vocal and physical acknowledgement. Quakers remained silent and did not yield to the aristocracy.

Remaining silent when acknowledgement was anticipated was a strong reason for dislike of the Quakers. Indeed, silence was as important an element of communication as speech in daily life and the appropriateness of each was determined by custom and social importance of the person being addressed (Burke 1993:128-141).

Quakers professed an equality of humans under God. “Terms which might indicate respect of youth to the aged and titles such as ‘Master’, ‘Mistress’, or ‘Sir’, ‘Your Majesty’, ‘Reverend’, ‘Your Humble Servant’, ‘Your Honour’, etc. were forbidden because they were symbols of deference and thus violated the Quaker principle of equality” (Brinton 1972). “The Quakers would not use words which designated class distinctions. Thus they would not follow the custom of saying ‘you’ to a superior and ‘thou’ or ‘thee’ to an inferior, but they would use ‘thou’ and ‘thee’ to all persons

including royalty, judges, and parents” (Brinton 1972: 48). “We beseech you, in your ordinary conversation among men, let your words be few and savoury, and observe the precept of the apostle, ‘Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth’” (Friends Society of London 1834: 41). “Plainness involved the determination to treat all other persons as equals” (Brinton 1972:48).

The reaction of the social aristocracy was both anger and mockery. “Time and again, one encounters judgments of their [Quakers] behaviour couched in such terms as ‘rude’, ‘unmannerly’, ‘uncivil’, ‘discourteous’, ‘disrespectful’, ‘contemptuous’, ‘arrogant’, ‘disdainful’, ‘churlish’, or ‘clownish’, imputing to them either ignorance or the flouting of good manners” (Bauman 1983: 55). Anger manifested itself in harsh reactions, such as in this anecdote by Richard Davies’s whose mistress was offended by his use of “thee” and “thou.”

“But when I gave it to my mistress, she took a stick and gave me such a blow upon my bare head, that made it swell and sore for a considerable time; she was so disturbed at it, that she swore she would kill me; though she would be hanged for me; the enemy so possessed her, that she was quite out of order; though beforetime she seldom, if ever, gave me an angry word” (Take from Bauman 1983:51).

Quaker actions and speech, “earned Friends the reproach of social elites, who feared that Quakers intended to overthrow the social order” (Davies 2000: 52). Fear led to mockery and the comparison of Quakers to animals in their lack of reaction.

None of the Quakers will give common respect to Magistrates, or to any Friends or Old Acquaintance. If they meet them by the way, or any stranger, they will go or ride by them, as though they were dumb, or as though they were

beasts rather than men, not affording a Salutation, or Resaluting though themselves be saluted. (Higginson 1653:28).

Although Quakers were generally looked upon with suspicion, in some instances respect was gained, as can be seen in this story by Thomas Chalkey who found himself in an awkward situation in Bermuda where he sat with the Governor of Bermuda in a toast to the King's health with non-Quakers looking on quite intently to see his reaction.

...And after dinner the governor's practice was to drink the king's health, and he hoped I would drink it along with them. "Yes, said the rest of the table, Mr. Chalkey (as they called me) will surely drink the king's health with us." So they passed the glass, with the king's health, till it came to me; and when it came to me, they all looked steadfastly at me, to see what I would do, and I looked as steadfastly to the Almighty, and I said to them, I love king George, and wish him as well as any subject he hath; and it is known to thousands that we pray for him in our meetings and assemblies for the worship of Almighty God; but as to drinking healths, either the king's, or any man's else, it is against my professed principle, I looking on it to be a vain, idle custom. They replied, "That they wished the king had more such subjects as I was; for I had professed a hearty respect for him:" and the governor and they all were very kind and friendly to me all the time I was on the island" (Chalkey 1808:76).

This particular story by Thomas Chalkey demonstrates some sympathy and respect for the Quaker way, however there are many more stories of the contempt in which non-Quakers held the Friends.

Quakers were treated poorly and with much disdain by many of their contemporaries. Quakers distrusted and disregarded the hierarchical social structure that they felt was corrupt. They rebelled against it with plainness and silence. These actions

brought about fear and mockery from those operating within the social hierarchy who saw the Quaker sect as a threat to status and aristocratic positions. This fear and misunderstanding led to mockery.

Quaker speech and body language certainly gave them a rebellious label, but it also unified them as a people. Their speech and actions reinforced their beliefs.

The Society of Friends encouraged members to adopt a distinctive bodily style whether it was in speech, dress, or bodily gestures...A certain degree of uniformity enabled Friends to differentiate themselves from the rest of society and thus enhance their own sense of identity (Davies 2000: 44)

Plainness would become a “badge of membership” (Davies 2000:46). Quaker speech was limited by the individual in demonstration of unification, but also as a devotion to a purer and more sincere way of life; “...that our conversation, seasoned with the fear of God, may appear correspondent to our profession, and answer the witness of God in others. 1731. W.E.—1801.” (Friends Society of London 1834:38). Quakers were unique in their “peculiar behavior”, therefore “being a Quaker was knowingly behaving like a Quaker” (Marietta 1974).

Silence, sincerity, and functionality with divine blessing and profit as the end result were the goals of this means of limited communication. Over time, Quakers developed their own dialect of silence that would be recognized by the rest of society, further unifying them through their voice.

Since Friends could not live in geographic isolation and thus were unable to avoid some social involvement, their peculiar speech, dress, and manners allowed them to demonstrate their separateness and affirm the boundaries

between them and other inhabitants of local society (Davies 2000:54).

However, the Quaker dialect of plain and simple speech allowed them to be mocked and stereotyped as a group as well.

What Friends judged plain and simple speech was derided by some as ‘nonsensical whining’ or ‘uncouth, strange words and gibberish language’; others jested that Quaker speech was incomprehensible without the aid of a ‘Quaker lexicon’ (Anonymous 1687).

Quakers believed that their speech was more Godly and less worldly, making them more religious and spiritual beings, however the reaction of society was much different to the silence and the odd dialect.

A Quaker’s abnormal delivery and incomprehensibility revealed to contemporaries not an inner grace, the quality most sought after, but a temperament which was unruly and too easily subject to whim. Quaker language reinforced the view that the character of Friends was eccentric and for that reason not to be trusted. (Davies 2000:54).

Some saw Quakers as hypocrites. “Magnus Byne said that Quakers rudely refused to eat with people not of their company, calling them ‘Devils and Dogs.’ Richard Baxter wrote, ‘I have had more railing language from them [Quakers] in one letter, than I ever heard from all the scolds in the country to my remembrance this twenty years’” (Byne 1656:1) (Baxter 1657:4) (Moore 2000:119).

Quakers had a peculiar way of speaking and acting in silence and plainness that separated and unified them at the same time. These actions were perceived as a badge of Quakerism. This badge demonstrated their religious sect. Thereby, those who wished to convert to Quakerism would have to adopt this manner of speech and action in order to

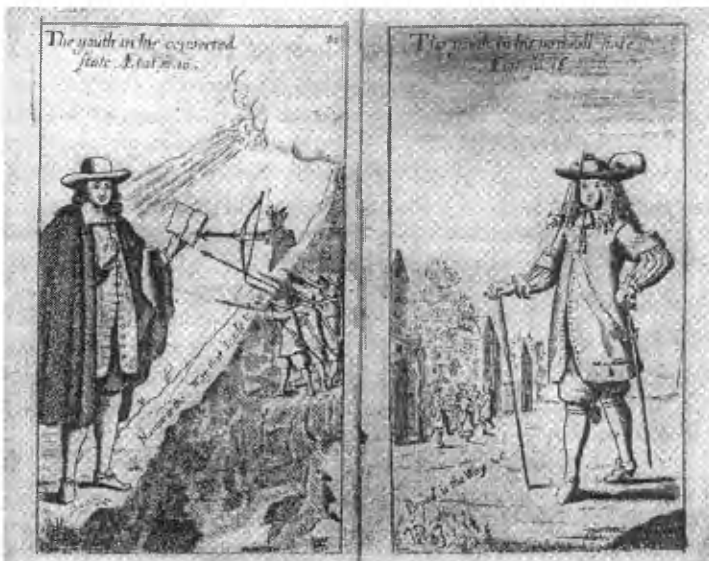


Figure 6. From Benjamin Keech, *War with the Devil* (1676), frontpiece (Taken from Davies 2000:63).

become fully assimilated into the Society of Friends. The convert John Gratton changed his body language upon his conversion to Quakerism and likened it “a child learning to walk” (Gratton 1720:44). Thomas Ellwood, upon conversion, “reformed

his bodily carriage along with his clothes, gestures, and speech”

(Ellwood 1714:41). These actions, mannerisms, and speech were created as a means of reinforcing the religious beliefs of the Quaker who felt that a plainer functional lifestyle was the ideal lifestyle to lead in the eyes of God. These actions and speech reflected Quaker religion.

Plain and functional speech were actions needed to maintain a Godly lifestyle. Nothing was to be wasted on frivolity. Waste meant less energy for functional works, and frivolity took away an edge of sincerity in one’s devotion to a Christian lifestyle. “What outsiders interpreted as Quaker perversity were viewed by the sect as signs of progress to heavenly perfection and indicative of inward spiritual growth” (Davies 2000:45). Plainness and functionality was devotion to the Quaker.

For the extremely devoted Quaker, even feelings of good cheer could be considered deviation from the path of Light.

Some Friends were anxious even that jokes, laughter, certain facial expressions or vocal intonations should not be permitted among members since they distorted the countenance, thereby indicating that Quakers did not possess a noble and religious disposition. (Edmundson 1820:xv) (Davies 2000:49).

For some Quakers, the devotion to the control of one's actions was so extreme as to include the very subtleties of communication. "Certain tones of voice or facial gestures which might be interpreted as good manners were to be spurned" (Davies 2000:49). These "good manners" were spurned because they were a product of a sinful hierarchical corrupt society in the eyes of the Quaker, a society that fell from grace.

The Quakers lacked excitement in their actions and speech as well. Chalkey describes these attributes in his wife.

My wife was a sober and religious young woman, and of a quiet natural temper, and disposition; which is excellent ornament to the fair sex; and indeed it is both to male and female; for, according to the holy scriptures, 'a meek and quiet spirit is with the Lord of great price' (Chalkey 1808: 72).

Excitement meant passion, and passion was an earthy vice, a desire of the flesh. "Friends were not to be intemperate, quick, or loud in discourse. And 'rash' or 'passionate' words were also to be avoided by mothers speaking to their children since it was feared that this might plant an evil seed which could lead to imitation in adulthood and thus dishonor to God" (Bauman 1983:22). "...Sober-minded Friends were 'stiff, blunt and inflexible' with a posture that was 'ordinarily with their arms folded upon their breasts, their hats somewhat of a large size...a walk slow, stark and severe, and out of that posture they will not put themselves" (Davies 2000:59). "All forms of speech play and verbal art were to

be rejected as the idlest of idle and corrupt speaking, all ‘wicked singing, and idle jesting, and foolish laughter.’” (Bauman 1983:23).

Quakers had to communicate. Communication was functional. Although Friends believed that speech was a trap laid by the devil, it had to be used in day-to-day life and in religious meetings.

Because of the Quaker distrust of human speaking and the religious imperative of a silence of the flesh, however, speaking in religious worship was a complex and delicately balanced act for the Quakers. The tension between silence and speaking in worship provided an important dynamic to the meeting for worship, as to so much else in Quaker life (Bauman 1983:124).

Quaker speech in meeting houses is an important symbol for the Quaker lifestyle outside of the meeting house. Quakers had to speak for functional purposes. Quakers had to earn money for functional purposes, however to achieve divine blessing through profit, they had to make compromises, such as owning slaves. Slaves helped Quakers to achieve greater wealth and divine blessing. Quakers owned slaves to achieve profits and divine blessing, just as they spoke during meetings, albeit briefly, to achieve a closer connection with God. In summation, speech in the meeting house and Quaker slave owning were both issues of tension amongst the Friends.

Although Quaker communication was limited in pursuit of a purer, more Godly lifestyle, phrases and words seem to have been created to substitute for a selection of the general society’s phrases. It was still necessary for Quakers to communicate, with

themselves and with others. Thereby, some speech was invented when silence would not do.

The sect seems to have possessed its own particular argot, and, while not necessarily inventing a wholly new vocabulary, was prepared to substitute expressions or words consistent with the tenets of Quakerism for those applied in conventional usage (Halliday 1978).

Quakers created an “anti-language” that both separated themselves from an envisioned corrupted society. It also conformed to a more Holy path of functionality and plainness.

Quakers acted out against society. They maintained a plain and functional means of communication and carriage of the self. Quakers even went so far as to create phrases and vocabulary unique to their sect in an effort to be more Godly and distance themselves from the general society. “[Quakers] argued that since bodily gestures and deportment reflected the disposition of the soul, control of the outward body would have a beneficial effect on the inner self” (Chartier 1989:172-174).

Quaker speech and actions were contrary to the constructs of the society in which they lived. They were considered rebels against modern society and the aristocracy. Quakers thought that many of the actions of society demonstrated a falseness. People’s actions and salutations were a charade and the people themselves hypocrites. Quakers felt language was a tool used by the devil to capture the weak of heart. “Quakers believed that the language of humanity, given at the Fall, was a snare set by the Devil which would corrupt and distract from the guidance of the spirit” (Davies 2000:52).

Unnecessary language and any social ritual was suspected to be a path away from the divine Light. “The sect was wary of all forms of address because it was distrustful of the hypocrisy which it felt inevitably accompanied them” (Davies 2000:48).

The customs, and manner, and fashion of this world, which is practiced amongst people in the World, when they meet one another, they will say how do you do Sir, doff the Hat, scrape a Leg, make a courchy [curtsy]. I am glad to see you well...when they are past them, with the same tongue wish evil to them...(Fox 1657:1-2).

Not only were formal addresses considered hypocrisy by the Quakers, but they also inferred a social hierarchy which the Quakers acted against as well. “For many at this time, manners were considered only social rituals which eased face to face interaction; they might have little to do with true sincerity or a person’s genuine feeling for another” (Burke 1993:13). Quakers promoted speech that was only functional, sincere, and profitable. Any deviance from that manner of speaking was considered sinful and wasted breath.

Quaker speech and body language was meant with only sincerity, function, and profit in mind. Anything that strayed from that path was frivolous, sinful, hypocritical, and wasteful. A Quaker once remarked, “Others wear badges of their dignities, but we those of Christian humility” (Voltaire 1734:26) (Davies 2000:56).

Sincerity and function were essential to Quaker speech, but so too was profit. Wasted breath was wasted profit, be it spiritual or material. Profit was recognition by God that a Quaker soul was walking in the Divine Light. Profit, like function and sincerity, was a key component in social actions and speech conducted by the Quaker.

Quakers were to, “Speak properly, and in a few words as you can, but always plainly; for the end of speech is not ostentation but to be understood” (Penn 1702).

Quaker dress, speech, and body language were to be functional, profitable, and sincere.

...The advantage to Friends of a simple deportment was that it did not feed the pride of others nor compromise Quaker sincerity. ‘Grave’, ‘sober’, ‘serious’ are the words which recur in description of Quaker bodily style by Friends and others (Davies 2000:59).

Quakers believed their time to be valuable and tried to remain in a path of light. Profit, both monetary and spiritual was the result of avoiding idleness. In a book of disciplines published by the Friends Society of London, the Quaker authors encourage fellow Friends to,

Avoid unnecessary frequenting of taverns, alehouses, all looseness, excess, and unprofitable and idle discourses, mis-spending their precious time and substance to the dishonour of truth, and scandal of our holy profession. 1691. W.E. (Friends Society of London 1834:37).

Quakers even went so far as to condemn monastic life because they felt, “[it] is a lazy, rusty, unprofitable Self-Denial” (Frost 1973:189). Profitable speech and profitable actions were encouraged because they were symbolic of an avoidance of sloth and bureaucracy associated with hierarchy. Quakers found that non-Quakers “[beheld] the vanity, unprofitableness, and insincerity of the salutations, customs, and fashions of the world” (Friends Society of London 1834: 41). Profit to the Quaker was spiritual and monetary. And monetary profit from a functional business was spiritual profit in the form of God’s blessing and acknowledgement of leading an efficient, functional lifestyle.

This dedication to profit and functionality in the name of Christianity and God manifests itself in the business practices of Quakers. “Where the truth of God is made manifest in the light of Jesus, and lived in the life and power, none can or dare take liberty to idleness, and slothfulness in business” (Symonds 1652:6) (Moore 2000:123).

William Penn wrote of this diligence as,

[A] Virtue useful and laudable among Men; It is a discreet and understanding Application to one’s Self to Business; and avoids the Extreame of Idleness and Drudgery. It gives great Advantages to Men: It loses no Time, it conquers Difficulties, recovers Disappointments, gives Dispatch, supplies Want of Parts; and is that to them, which a Pond is to a Spring; tho’ it has no Water of it self, it will keep what it gets, and is never dry....Shun Diversions: think only of the present Business, till that be done....Solomon praises Diligence very highly, First it is the Way to Wealth: The diligent Hand makes Rich...Frugality is a Virtue too, and not of little Use in Life, the better Way to be Rich, for it has less Toil and Temptation” (Penn 1669: 908-909) (Tolles 1948: 45).

Quakers’ plain, functional, and profitable speech and mannerisms symbolically reflected the lifestyle they chose to lead. Quaker speech and mannerisms were a symbol of their lifestyle, their religious sect, and defiance of what they saw as a current corrupt hierarchical social system.

For this study, Quaker lifestyle, as seen symbolically through their plain, functional, and profitable speech and action, is reflected in their probate inventories, the goods they owned. The items should be free of frivolity, and be both functional and profitable. The categories of functional consumables identified for this study were tools,

livestock, and slaves. These items were plain and functional and acted to maximize profit and wealth.

Quakers were plain, sincere, functional people devoted to a lifestyle of equality and Christianity. Unnecessary speech was considered to be a waste of breath and deviation from a Christian and Quaker lifestyle. “[Quaker] silence demands a limitation on speaking, though not necessarily a full rejection of it” (Bauman 1983: 22). Speech and body language was functional and had to be used within the greater society, however it had to be tempered and controlled to more silent and Christian levels. “Singled out for special condemnation, as we might expect in a radical puritan movement, was talk for its own sake, for the carnal pleasure it afforded” (Bauman 1983: 23). In lieu of this “silence”, the rest of society became leery of the Quakers who would outwardly dismiss the social hierarchy.

Quaker body language struck fear into the heart of the elite because it represented a different set of social values, frighteningly different from that which then prevailed. And dislike of Quaker practice was not limited to the gentlemanly and clerical class. Friends’ brazen and public dismissal of what passed for good manners made them seem subversive and offensive to a wide range of people (Davies 2000:63).

In speaking and acting, as well as dressing, in plainness, Quakers unified themselves as a people, strengthening each others’ devotion and resolve with peer pressure. In doing so openly in the outside world, Quakers also segregated themselves from society.

CHAPTER IX

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

For this particular study, probate inventories were reviewed to distinguish items of conspicuous consumption and functional consumption. It is my contention that Quakers avoided conspicuous consumption, but bought more functional items than their non-Quaker neighbors such as furniture, livestock, tools, and slaves. Functional items still demonstrated Quaker modesty in that they lacked any aspect of fashion. In addition, these functional items would have emphasized self-sufficiency and individualism that is promoted in the Quaker ideology. These functional items could be purchased with money saved from a modest lifestyle free of fashion, alcohol, and firearms.

It is my contention that the material goods of Quakers when compared to the goods of non-Quakers seen in the probate records of York County, Virginia will demonstrate a decrease in elements pertaining to conspicuous consumption, but show an increase in items that are strictly functional.

The probate inventories of five known Quakers in York County, Virginia were each compared with two non-Quakers whose estate values were approximately equivalent and who passed away at approximately the same time. Each Quaker then, had two non-

Quaker contemporaries on which to draw comparisons. Each set of three individuals was considered a “group” for this study. In all diagnostic tests, the two non-Quakers were compared to provide a range in which the Quaker’s results could be measured and determined to be conspicuous or functional.

Diagnostic tests include identifying the usage of modifiers such as “calico” or “flowered” in probate inventories that would qualify items considered superfluous by Quakers. The probate inventories were also scanned for specific items that may demonstrate wealth such as candlesticks, timepieces, pictures, and glassware. In addition, the probate inventories were scanned for functional items. For this study, livestock, tools, and slave values were calculated. In addition, the percentage of the total estate value was calculated for each of the functional categories for each individual. By looking at these specific items, patterns of conspicuous consumption and functional consumption within the Quaker community, however subtle, could be identified and quantified.

CHAPTER X

IDENTIFICATION OF QUAKERS IN THE HISTORIC RECORD

Quakers are rather difficult to identify in the colonial records. Because they did not take an oath or bear arms, they were not apt to contribute to the governmental process in colonial times, making them a scarcity in court records. In essence, many Quakers avoided any governmental duties such as surveying highways and jury duty. This made the search for Quaker inventories difficult because only the use of primary court records would identify a Quaker. Perhaps because Quakers were “tolerated” in Virginia, they are rarely labeled Quakers in court documents, and thus, quite difficult to clearly identify as a Quaker. However, it was the Quaker act of not taking an oath, which would lend a hand in identifying an individual Quaker in the York County, Virginia court records.

Despite Quaker passive avoidance of government, they did end up within the colonial government’s bureaucratic matrix from time to time. Because Quakers would not take an oath, they could not be “sworn in” to tell the truth, to give testimony in a court proceeding, or act on behalf of the court in an administrative duty such as evaluating the estate of a neighbor, legislation in Virginia was enacted to allow them to give their “solemn affirmation”. This solemn affirmation acted in the same way as an oath, holding

the Quakers to their word. The law that was enacted in 1705 can be seen in *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia*.

XXXI. Provided always, That the people commonly called Quakers, shall have the same liberty of giving their evidence, by way of solemn affirmation and declaration, as is prescribed by one act of parliament, *Septimo & Octavo Gulielmi Tertii Regis*, intituled, *An act that the solemn affirmation and declaration of the people called Quakers, shall be accepted instead of an oath, in the usual form*; which said act of parliament, for so much thereof as related to such affirmation and declaration, and for the time of its continuance in force, and not otherwise, shall be, to all intents and purposes, in full force within this dominion (Hening 1823: 298).

This particular law gave one the ability to identify a Quaker, provided that Quaker was in the York County, Virginia court records and gave a solemn affirmation.

Because the Quakers of York County were so few in number, they are very hard to identify in the records. In identifying Quakers, research began with two known Quakers, and records were scoured to find acquaintances with those two particular individuals. Fleming Bates was a prominent Quaker who died in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, and John Bates, Jr. was a Quaker who died in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. John Bates, Jr. was not used in this study, because a study done previously on him by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation was used for a comparison to this study.

Upon researching their records, many other names affiliated with the Quaker faith were identified, but only five had probate inventories on file. Those Quakers are Mary Bates, James Bates, Fleming Bates, William Ratcliff (1726), and William Ratcliff (1784).

Unfortunately, due to the difficulty in identifying Quakers in the colonial records, the sample size is small and they are representative of two prominent Quaker families in the Skimino Creek area of York County, Virginia.

Despite the small sample size and their family relation, an unbiased quantitative study of their estates could be done by comparing their estates to those of non-Quakers with equivalent estate values to demonstrate any difference in material culture. Specific elements of conspicuous consumption and functional consumption were calculated through the existence of specific modifiers, artifacts, and percentage of estate value for specific types of goods.

The probate inventories of the Quakers were each compared with two non-Quaker inventories from the same time period and with approximately the same estate value. The two non-Quaker inventories could provide a range on which the Quaker inventory could be compared. There were 15 total inventories that were split into five groups. Each group contains a Quaker inventory and two non-Quaker inventories for comparison. Below is a listing of the groups with the Quaker italicized.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
<i>Mary Bates</i>	<i>Fleming Bates</i>	<i>James Bates</i>	<i>William Ratcliff (1784)</i>	<i>William Ratcliff (1726)</i>
Mildred Miles	John Moreland	Philip Dedman	William Goodson	Mathew Lutwidge
Lucy Burcher	Thomas Hansford	John Howard	Joseph Stroud	Samuel Hunter

Table 1. Listing of Probate Study Groups.

CHAPTER XI

MODIFIERS

Modifiers are important in this study of probate inventories because they give further description of an item. These modifiers can track aspects of conspicuous consumption of an individual according to their probate record by further describing a particular item. For Quakers, “Plainness could be manifested by a studied avoidance of gaudy or over elaborate ornamentation” (Tolles 1960:88). It is the contention of the author that Quakers had an approximately equal amount of conspicuous consumables as their non-Quaker neighbors. As mentioned previously, Quakers were advised by the administrators of their faith to remain modest.

That all should keep to the plainest in their household stuffe and furniture both riding and otherwise, avoiding in particular striped or flowered bed or window hangings of divers colours and quilt counterpaines and table clothes of like gaudy colors likewise vallants and fringes and that side saddles and others be plaine without fringes and bridles without needless buckles and bosses (Minutes of Yearly Meeting in Brown 1987:263).

Modifiers are useful to the study of conspicuous consumption in Quakers and to the historical archaeologist in general under, “the assumption upon which this analysis is

based is that some of these distinctions were also made in day-to-day communication. Furthermore, it is assumed that all of these distinctions had cultural significance” (Beaudry 1988:45).

MODIFIERS THAT INDICATE CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION

Modifiers will indicate materials that are “gaudy” or “over elaborate” by Quaker standards. The modifiers tested for in this study were “calico,” “flowered,” “striped,” “silver,” and “Japaned” or “China.” Any good that would demonstrate a design of the aforementioned styles would have been considered worldly, conspicuous, and flashy by Quaker standards. Owning such goods meant becoming part of a corrupted society and not following the path of Light. This corrupted society was one in which the Quaker way of life so desperately tried to avoid. Therefore, for a Quaker to own any item with a gaudy design would have meant straying from the “path of light” or the “path of truth.” Taking on these fashions would mean the world would judge you. However, just as with any cultural group, not all individuals will conform to the guidelines of the faith, and the Quakers of Virginia were no exception.

“OLD” AND THE FUNCTIONAL “RETRO” QUAKER

In addition to modifiers that were used to demonstrate items that are superfluous in decoration or design, the modifier “old” was used in this study because it is believed to demonstrate the absence of fashion and further emphasizes plainness. In this study, all of the modifiers except the modifier “old” were used to find elements contrary to Quaker ideology. Mary Beaudry indicates in “Words for things: linguistic analysis of probate inventories” that use of the word “old” as a modifier was on the wane in the 18th century.

She states, “By the middle of the eighteenth century, use of the term *old* diminished considerably...” (Beaudry 1988:46). Considering Beaudry’s analysis of general frequency in her study of modifiers, the presence of the modifier *old* becomes all the more significant for this study as it pertains to Quaker goods. “Old” could have meant worn or out of fashion. In either case, it would distinguish an item the Quaker would be more apt to have in his or her possession. A Quaker would have been more apt to won unfashionable garments as encouraged by their society, and it is my contention that they would have purchased more functional goods, goods that would be used for the betterment of the family unit, and not for display purposes to stroke the ego of the owner.

CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY OF MODIFIERS

The modifiers that were intended to demonstrate greater amounts of conspicuous consumption by non-Quakers when compared to Quakers were not conclusive. The modifiers “striped” and “flowered” did not appear in any of the 15 inventories. “Calico” appeared only once in a non-Quaker, but this was not nearly enough information on which to support a theory. The “China” or “Japaned” modifiers came up in two groups of inventories for a total of six times. Four instances were with non-Quakers and 2 were with the Quaker, James Bates. Although not entirely conclusive, one can interpret that Quakers did in fact own items that were “Japaned” or “China.”

The modifier “silver” showed up 21 times in the 15 inventories. Each “grouping” of a Quaker and the two non-Quakers contained at least one silver “modifier.” However, three out of five of these groupings demonstrated that the Quaker inventories contained a greater number of “silver” modifiers. In these three groups, the inventories of Fleming

Bates, James Bates and William Ratcliff (1726) contained more of the silver modifier than their non-Quaker counterparts. This result demonstrates that the Quakers were participating in some conspicuous consumption, or that they didn't consider silver itself to be a superfluous material.

The modifier "old" provided the most interesting results. It appeared 60 times in 13 out of 15 inventories, and it was contained in each Quaker probate inventory. In 4 out of the 5 groups, the Quaker inventories contained more "old" modifiers than their non-Quaker comparative inventories. In group 2, all of the inventories contained the same number of "old" modifiers. Of the four groups whose Quaker inventories demonstrated more "old" modifiers, 2 of them contained a count well beyond the range provided by the two non-Quaker inventories.

Group	Probate Record	"Old" Modifier
Group 5	<i>William Ratcliff (1726)</i>	17
	Mathew Lutwidge	3
	Samuel Hunter	10
Group 3	<i>James Bates</i>	8
	Philip Dedman	3
	John Howard	1

Table 2. List of Groups with Significant "Old" Modifier Statistics.

This result may attest to the Quaker preference to buy material goods that are just behind the current fashion, be they clothes, furniture, or ceramics. This modifier may also lend credence to this study's theory of functional consumption. That functional consumption theory being that Quakers would buy more functional goods that were

intended to last a long time. These items would show more wear because of their extended use, appearing “old” to the person creating the probate inventory.

Although many of the modifiers used in this study were somewhat inconclusive, the modifier “silver” demonstrates either conspicuous consumption by Quakers or the feeling by Quakers that silver is not a superfluous material. In addition, the modifier “old” seems to lend credence to Quaker appearance in apparel and furnishings, as well as craftsmanship of well-worn functional items.

CHAPTER XII

SPECIFIC ITEMS

There are specific items in eighteenth century colonial Virginia that would have been considered expensive, and would have been purchased mainly by the elite for the purpose of demonstration of wealth. According to their modest and plain habits in material culture, Quakers would have avoided these specific luxury items, as they are used to demonstrate wealth in a home. “As with the testimony of plain speech, concerned with eliminating pride and self-will, the rules governing ‘deportment and apparell’ was really aimed at the possession and conscious display of certain kinds of objects, ‘seeming more to be seen than otherwise’” (Brown 1987:278). “Modesty should prevail and nothing that smacked of vanity or the satisfaction of human pride was permitted. Fashionable accessories such as lace, ribbons, cuffs, hatbands, and points were not to be worn by Friends” (Davies 2000:55). The particular items that were selected for this study included tea wares, time pieces, candlesticks, pictures, and glassware, lace, ribbon, buckles, and buttons.

LACE, RIBBON, BUCKLES AND BUTTONS

“I took off from my Apparel those unnecessary Trimmings of Lace, Ribbands, and Useless Buttons: which had no real Service; but were set on only for that which was

by mistake called Ornament, And I ceased to wear Rings” (Ellwood 1714:26) (Davies 2000:55). Lace, ribbon, buckles, and buttons did not show up enough in the inventories to draw a conclusion on pattern of conspicuous consumption favoring

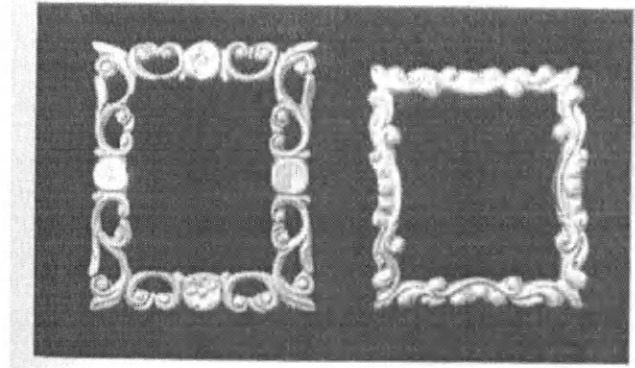


Figure 7. Ornate shoe buckles (From Hume, *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America*).

Quakers or non-Quakers. Lace and ribbon did not show up in any of the 15 inventories. Buckles and buttons showed up on three occasions, but no definitive conclusion could be drawn because they only showed up in two inventories. However, the inventories that they did show up in were those of non-Quakers, namely William Goodson and Mildred Miles. It is also possible that buckles could have been overlooked in the probate inventory because of their small size, and relatively miniscule value when compared to items such as furniture and bedding.

TEA WARES

The analysis of tea wares in the probate inventories proved to be interesting. Tea wares, namely teacups and saucers, showed up in Group 2 and Group 3. In Group 2, the only tea wares were in the inventory of the Quaker, Fleming Bates. In Group 3, all of the members of the study



Figure 8. Chinese Porcelain Tea Cup (www.apva.org).

group had tea wares in their inventories. The two non-Quakers, Philip Dedman and John Howard had inventory entries that did not attach an amount to the number of teacups, but simply gave an entry in the plural form. The Quaker of Group 3, James Bates, had 14 teacups and saucers. Neither entry of the teacups and saucers within the inventories was with a modifier such as Japaned, floral, or China. This lack of a modifier may allude to the fact that the tea wares may have been of a “plain” or “modest” design. However, the fact that they exist in Quaker inventories at all leads to possibility that Fleming Bates and James Bates were participating in conspicuous consumption at some level. Perhaps Fleming Bates and James Bates considered the tea wares to be a functional good. Being two of the wealthier individuals in this study, they may have seen the aristocratic tea ritual as necessary when entertaining business associates in their home.

TIMEPIECES

Identification of timepieces in the probate inventories also produced interesting results similar to those of the tea wares. Listing of time pieces occurred 6 times in 4 inventories over 3 groups: Group 2, Group 3, and Group 4. Although the numbers do not lend themselves to a solid conclusion, Groups 2 and 3 showed that the Quakers, namely Fleming Bates and James Bates, respectively, owned more time pieces than the non-Quakers that were used for comparison. This would seemingly demonstrate a pattern of conspicuous consumption by the same two Quakers who had owned tea wares. The timepieces could be considered a functional item, however they are quite valuable in the inventories. Fleming Bates’s watch was valued at £3 and James Bates’s owned both a clock at £6 and a watch at £2.5.

In both of these instances, Fleming Bates and James Bates have stood out among all the inventories and all of the groups as demonstrating conspicuous consumption. It should be noted that both of these two Quakers would have been considered wealthy for their time. Fleming Bates's inventory totaled £256 and James Bates's inventory totaled £996.

CANDLESTICKS AND PICTURES

No conclusions could be drawn from the presence of candlesticks and pictures. Candlesticks were identified in both Quaker and non-Quaker inventories alike, and do not show any patterns that favor one group over

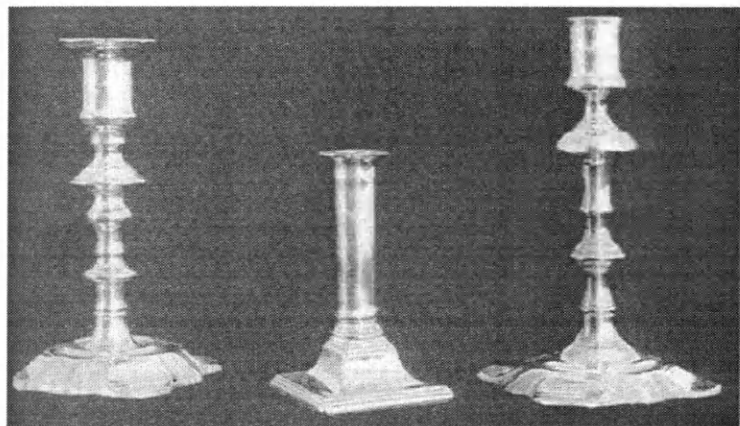


Figure 9. Candlesticks (From Hume, *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America*).

another. Pictures were only found in one inventory, and did not allow for any fruitful comparison, however the owner of the 7 pictures was non-Quaker William Goodson of Group 4. Only two Quakers had candlesticks in their inventories. James Bates's inventory listed 2 candlesticks and the inventory of William Ratcliff (1784) noted 3 candlesticks.

GLASSWARE

Glassware was found in four of the five groups, with the exception being Group 1. In each of these four groups that tested positive for glassware, the Quaker involved also



Figure 10. Stemmed Glassware (From Hume, *Glass in Colonial Williamsburg's Archeological Collections*).

had glassware within their inventory, although in seemingly small amounts. The value and amount of glassware owned by Quakers in these instances never was higher than their non-Quaker group counterparts. The Quakers in Groups 3 and 4 only owned one item of glass, and the Quaker from

Group 5 had only 2 items of glass. Fleming Bates of Group 2 also owned glassware, but the amount was not specified. The “glasses” were also noted on his inventory as being “in the Corner Cupboard” away from the public’s eye. The fact that the glass was listed as “in the Corner Cupboard” could have meant that Fleming Bates was attempting to be modest, and not overtly displaying his glassware, and in essence, his wealth. The small amounts of glass found in the Quaker probate inventories does not lend itself to support a pattern of conspicuous consumption by the Quakers, but the difference between the non-Quakers within the individual group comparisons was not great enough to demonstrate that Quakers were purchasing notably less glassware.

FURNITURE

Furniture was counted, separated by type as the inventories noted, and the total values tabulated for all 15 inventories. In all 5 groups, Quakers had a higher variety of furniture compared to their non-Quaker equivalents. Groups 1 and 4 showed the Quakers

Mary Bates and William Ratcliff (1724) with values of furniture at 23% of their total estate values, far beyond their non-Quaker group equivalents. The other three groups, Groups 2, 3, and 5, showed a furniture value at a high percentage of their total estate value, but not exceeding the precedents set by their non-Quaker equivalents. These results did not allow for a healthy conclusion to be drawn that would demonstrate functional consumption in furniture, although the York County Quakers did seem to own larger amounts of furniture overall.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY OF SPECIFIC ITEMS

A number of modifiers and specific items that were looked at in an effort to demonstrate a pattern of Quakers refraining from conspicuous consumption, no clear pattern could be detected. Although glassware may show a subtle propensity for Quaker restraint, both timepieces and tea wares demonstrate that Quakers, namely the wealthier Quakers, were quite possibly consuming items meant for display. Although the wealthier Quakers in the people under study owned the tea wares and timepieces, they were Quakers all the same.

A study done by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation of merchant Quaker John Bates of York County, Virginia yielded similar results, which alluded only subtly to the Quaker lifestyle. The study of John Bates included a comparison of his probate inventory, which included items in his store, to that of non-Quaker merchants of the same time period.

John Bates's inventory demonstrated that this wealthy Quaker did not adhere strictly to the Quaker lifestyle. "The luxury items listed in some of the downstairs, or

public rooms, such as mirrors, clocks, spyglasses and ceramic tea wares, suggest a certain degree of social display” (Samford 1990:43). Samford goes on to characterize John Bates as typical of Chesapeake gentry in his “acquisition of consumer goods.”

CHAPTER XIII

FUNCTIONAL ITEMS

In addition to conspicuous consumption, the probate inventories were tested for “functional consumption”. That is, how much was spent on specific goods that could be considered “functional”, and were Quakers more apt to own functional goods, as they were to refrain from conspicuous consumption? For this study, functional items were identified to be tools, livestock, and slaves. Furniture was considered quasi-functional, but was and should be analyzed separately from tools, and livestock, and slaves that would not demonstrate obvious superfluous aspects as a piece of furniture might.

The three primary goods that were considered completely “functional” for this study were tools, livestock, and slaves. Slave owning was contrary to Quaker ideology, however Quakers in York County, Virginia owned slaves as demonstrated in this study. The three types of functional items were analyzed separately, and their percentages of total estate values were taken for comparison. In addition, the percentages of all three functional items were combined to see if a pattern of “functional consumption” could be identified between Quakers and non-Quakers with the theory that Quakers were more active consumers of functional goods.

SLAVES

The owning of slaves was considered contrary to the ideologies of the Quaker faith and morally wrong, however Quakers in York County did own slaves. This may be a testament to how closely the epitome of the Quaker lifestyle was emulated by the Quakers in York County.

Group	Name	Slaves #	Male	Female	Child	Total Slave Value	Slaves/%Total
1	Bates, Mary						
	Miles, Mildred						
	Burcher, Lucy						
2	Bates, Fleming	4	2	2		185.0.0	0.72
	Moreland, John						
	Hansford, Thomas	2		1	1	70.0.0	0.27
3	Bates, James	21	11	8	2	830.0.0	0.83
		1				445.10.	
	Dedman, Philip	6	6	8	2	0	0.73
	Howard, John	17	5	7	7	639.10.	0.64
4	Ratcliff, William						
	Goodson, William						
	Stroud, Joseph						
5	Ratcliff, William						
	Lutwidge, Mathew	1		1		18	0.31
	Hunter, Samuel	1	1			20	0.31

groups.

For this study, slaves are considered to be functional goods. They serve a functional purpose and are not a superfluous. Slaves were listed on the inventories of seven individuals in Groups 2, 3, and 5. Groups 2 and 3 demonstrate Quaker ownership of slaves by Fleming Bates and James Bates, respectively. In both instances of Quaker ownership of slaves, these slaves occupy a percentage of total estate value beyond that of their non-Quaker counterparts within their

Table 3. Slave Holdings in Probate Inventories.

Group 5 also demonstrates slave ownership. However, in this instance the Quaker William Ratcliff (1726) does not own any slaves, but his non-Quaker counterparts both own one slave apiece. The range of total estate values is from £52 to £63. Both slaves are 31% of their owners total estate value. In this particular instance, the Quaker with the lower total estate value would be less inclined to purchase slaves because the essential functional need for them is not yet evident. In addition, William Ratcliff (1726) would maintain a Quaker lifestyle more reflexive of the ideal, unlike his wealthier Quaker counterparts in Groups 2 and 3.

LIVESTOCK

Group	Name	Livestock Total	Livestock/% Total
1	Bates, Mary	8.9.0	0.40
	Miles, Mildred	0.12.1	0.02
	Burcher, Lucy	9.0.0	0.56
2	Bates, Fleming	14.2.6	0.05
	Moreland, John	136.0.0	0.36
	Hansford, Thomas	130.2.0	0.51
3	Bates, James	33.0.0	0.03
	Dedman, Philip	75.10.0	0.12
	Howard, John	96.3.0	0.10
4	Ratcliff, William	50.15.0	0.41
	Goodson, William	31.0.0	0.30
	Stroud, Joseph	19.1.0	0.15
5	Ratcliff, William	20.0.0	0.38
	Lutwidge, Mathew	0.0.0	0
	Hunter, Samuel	3.10.0	0.05

Table 4. Livestock Holdings in Probate Inventories.

The next functional item tested in the probate inventories was livestock. Livestock is most certainly functional in nature, providing meat and sustenance to both the family raising them and to those who might purchase the beasts. Although large amounts of livestock could be a display of wealth, their useful nature allows them to fall within the category of functional. The livestock values were tabulated and the percentage of total estate value was calculated for comparison. Only Groups 4 and 5 showed Quakers with a higher percentage of livestock compared to their total estate values than

their non-Quaker counterparts demonstrating an increase in functional consumption.

Groups 1, 2, and 3 showed that Quakers primarily owned far less livestock than the non-Quakers of their group.

TOOLS

The third functional category of goods that was tabulated from the probate

inventories was “tools.” Tools are the most

functional item in this particular group. They can be

used to complete and assist in numerous tasks. They

are used in agriculture, animal husbandry, and in

household situations as well. Tools rarely take on a

label of conspicuous, and epitomize the functional

simplicity a Quaker hopes to achieve. Although no

trend across all five groups could be identified for

tool ownership, there were Group comparisons that

were interesting. Groups 4 and 5 both showed

Quakers owning a much higher percentage of tools

compared their non-Quaker group members. Groups

1, 2, and 3 did not demonstrate any significant

Group	Name	Tools Total	Tools/% Total
1	Bates, Mary	0.6.0	0.01
	Miles, Mildred	0.10.0	0.02
	Burcher, Lucy	0.1.0	0
2	Bates, Fleming	4.14.6	0.02
	Moreland, John	114.0.8	0.3
	Hansford, Thomas	0.11.3	0
3	Bates, James	5.14.0	0.01
	Dedman, Philip	7.4.0	0.01
	Howard, John	10.13.0	0.01
4	Ratcliff, William	18.2.9	0.15
	Goodson, William	1.10.0	0.01
	Stroud, Joseph	6.18.0	0.05
5	Ratcliff, William	2.12.0	0.05
	Lutwidge, Mathew	1.13.0	0.03
	Hunter, Samuel	0.0.0	0.00

Table 5. Tools in Probate Inventories.

variances in tool ownership.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY OF FUNCTIONAL CONSUMPTION

Because the items tested for functional consumption showed mixed results across the five groups, the percentage of total estate value for slaves, livestock, and tools were combined to show a total percentage of functionally consumed goods existing for each individuals total estate. The results demonstrated a trend across four of the five groups that Quakers were consuming more “functional” goods on the whole. Although two of

Group	Name	%Slaves/Livestock/ Tools
1	Bates, Mary	0.41
	Miles, Mildred	0.04
	Burcher, Lucy	0.56
2	Bates, Fleming	0.79
	Moreland, John	0.66
	Hansford, Thomas	0.78
3	Bates, James	0.87
	Dedman, Philip	0.86
	Howard, John	0.74
4	Ratcliff, William	0.56
	Goodson, William	0.31
	Stroud, Joseph	0.20
5	Ratcliff, William	0.43
	Lutwidge, Mathew	0.34
	Hunter, Samuel	0.36

Table 6. Functional Consumption Percentages.

the four instances show the Quakers consuming functional items by one percentage point over their non-Quaker counterparts, it still lends good support to the theory that Quakers were consuming more functional goods than their non-Quaker neighbors in York County, Virginia in the eighteenth century. Functional goods epitomize the idealized Quaker lifestyle. They are simple, not gaudy, and are used in an everyday life of simplicity. It is extremely descriptive of the Quaker faith that when all three functional categories were combined, the Quaker is 80% more likely to own more functional goods than a non-Quaker contemporary. Testing probate inventories for functional consumables is an excellent means of capturing another cultural facet of Quakers and non-Quakers alike.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

Quakers are a fascinating culture and society. They lived lives under certain de facto rules that regulated how they should act, dress, speak, and live. However, they spoke against rules of the established society. They were leery of government, and sought to separate themselves from any mortal authority. However, the guidelines upon which a Quaker would base his or her life did were not so strict and regulated as to allow a Friend to bend the unwritten rules. Such was the case in this study. Although the Quakers of York County, Virginia considered themselves part of the Society of Friends leading lives of functional independence, they were also human and thus susceptible to external and society pressures to conspicuously consume.

There are many aspects to the Quaker way of life that could allow a Quaker to stray from the path of Light. Although Quakers were to lead simple, functional lives, devoid of current fashion, style, and conspicuous consumption, they were not restricted or committed to a life of poverty. In fact, accumulated monetary wealth was considered to be a blessing from God, acknowledgement of the Quaker individual's devotion and faith. This acquisition of wealth could certainly lend an enormous amount of pressure on a

Quaker individual to spend, to purchase goods with disposable income. Sometimes these goods may be conspicuous, such as a timepiece, glass, or tea wares.

Although Quakers may have broken with the tenets of the Society and conspicuously consumed from time to time with their disposable income, Quakers would have a tendency to purchase functional goods, goods that would be sturdy and last. These items would be simple and functional, tools or livestock. They would serve a purpose. For the wealthier Quaker, slaves were an option. They, too, were a functional good. With them, the Quaker could produce more goods and make more money, gaining the blessing of God. However, slavery was frowned upon by the Quaker faith.

Slavery is where the Quaker came upon a fork in the road of morality. Slaves meant continued wealth, and wealth was a blessing from God. When the Quaker looked to those in their society for answers, they would get a tangential response. A Quaker would not be cast out for owning slaves, he would be tolerated. Although many Quakers spoke out against slavery, those Quakers who owned slaves were not cast out in the middle of the 18th century. Without a strong stance with heavy repercussions, Quakers would continue to own slaves, functional slaves.

Quakers built their own image. They created a façade for other to see. This image was one of simplicity, free of current worldly fashions. This style was a symbol for the Quaker way of life, simple, plain, quaint, and devoid of worldly fashion. Although Quakers were quick to pick up a retro style of clothing and appearance as soon as a new fashion came about. In addition, the clothing of Quakers was of a fine make and material as seen in the diary of Thomas Reckitt. The Quaker propensity to pick up a retro

style demonstrates the Quaker willingness to pick up trends of non-Quaker society in some capacity. This action could extend to other worldly goods as well, such as timepieces and tea wares. In addition, Quakers were conscious of style, the style of the image they wanted to portray. Quakers were dressed in simple, functional clothes of high quality. This action demonstrated that although their faith limited what they could buy, quality was not an issue. They could spend a good sum of money on fine materials.

All of these factors show that a Quaker from York County, Virginia would certainly have the propensity to have more functional goods as their society would encourage them to purchase. The study in functional consumption shows this to be true in the sample of York County Quakers. In addition Quakers would be tempted to purchase conspicuous goods as well. Accumulation of wealth will lead to spending, and although a Quaker may buy more functional goods such as livestock, tools, or slaves, that Quaker may be tempted to buy a fashionable or conspicuous good as the Quaker does recognize fashion. The study of modifiers and conspicuous goods in this study shows the wealthier York County Quakers in possession of timepieces, tea wares, and glassware at the times of their deaths.

From these results, it can be concluded that wealthy Quakers enjoyed conspicuous consumption, just as it is with wealthy non-Quakers in York County, Virginia in the eighteenth century. In Virginia, it would seem that the need to satisfy the hunger for conspicuous display of wealth overcame the need to maintain a lifestyle epitomized by the Quaker ideology.

Conversely, functional consumption in Quakers seems to be subtly higher than that of the non-Quaker contemporaries in eighteenth century York County, Virginia. Because Quakers emphasize individualism and self-sufficiency in their lives, it is logical that they would purchase more functional items such as tools, livestock, and slaves. This may further be reiterated by the prominence of the modifier “old” in the probate inventories that demonstrates a lack of fashion and well-worn functional items of good craftsmanship.

The Quakers of York County, Virginia according to this study were just as apt as their non-Quaker contemporaries to partake in conspicuous consumption. However, these York County Quakers were certainly purchasing more functional items than their non-Quaker contemporaries demonstrating their Quaker values of individualism, simplicity, and functionality.

APPENDIX

SPREADSHEET OF COMPILED DATA FROM PROBATE RECORDS

	Group Name	Quaker?	Date of Inv.	Total Value	Furniture Value	Furn./% Total	#Furn. pieces	Chairs	Stools	Beds	Bedstead	Tables	Chests	Desks	Bookcase	Buffet	Couch	Bed/Bedstead/Bedding	Bed/% Total	Race	Sash	buckles	buttons	Teawares
1	Bates, Mary	Yes	2/28/1795	21.2.7 1/2	5.1.0	0.23	8 tott			3	2	1	2					4.9.6	0.19					
	Miles, Mildred	No	10/30/1795	25.19.11	0.1.9	0.04	1			1								0.1.9	0.01					1
	Burcher, Lucy	No	5/17/1786	16.11.6	2.2.9	0.12	6	3		1	1		1					1.10.0	0.06					
2	Bates, Fleming	Yes	6/26/1781	258.4.0	16.13.4	0.06	15	8		2		1	3	1				90.0	0.03					12
	Moreland, John	No	4/17/1780	378.2.0	5.1.0	0.01	4				2	1	1					2.0.0	0.01					
	Hansford, Thomas	No	10/21/1786	254.19.8	20.18.6	0.07	21	11		3	3		4					19.0.0	0.08					
3	Bates, James	Yes	7/15/1769	996.6.9	33.15.0	0.03	37	20		3	3	2	5	1	1	1	1	12.0.0	0.03					14
	Dedman, Philip	No	8/20/1770	607.3.0	29.11.0	0.04	31	18		4	4	1	2	2				19.0.0	0.04					Yes
	Howard, John	No	12/17/1770	987.12.0	23.2.0	0.02	26	13		2	1	2	6	2				8.0.0	0.01					Yes
4	Ratcliff, William	Yes	10/18/1784	121.2.11	29.9.0	0.23	26	12		3	3	2	7	1				15.0.0	0.23					
	Goodson, William	No	4/16/1785	103.2.0	4.08.0	0.03	2			1		1						2.18.0	0.03				4	45
	Stroud, Joseph	No	3/18/1783	123.7.9	13.7.6	0.10	14	6		1	2	2	2	1				8.0.0	0.06					
5	Ratcliff, William	Yes	10/21/1726	52.5.1	8.4.2	0.15	15		3	3	3	2	4					3.15.8	0.08					
	Lutwidge, Mathew	No	10/29/1727	58.6.1/2	9.9.10	0.15	27	16		2	3	5	1					5.3.0	0.08					
	Hunter, Samuel	No	9/18/1727	63.9.10 1/2	17.17.0	0.26	14	2		5	4	3						17.4.0	0.26					

Name	Time pieces	Books	Religious Books	Candlesticks	Pictures	Glassware	Calico Modifier	Flowered Modifier	China or Japaned Modifie	Striped Modifier	Silver Modifier	Old Modifier	Slaves #	Male	Female	Child	Total Slave Value	Slaves/%Total	Livestock Total	Livestock/% Total	Tools Total	Tools/% Total	%Slaves/Livestock/Tools
Bates, Mary				1								2							8.9.0	0.40	0.6.0	0.01	0.41
Miles, Mildred											1	1							0.12.1	0.02	0.10.0	0.02	0.04
Burcher, Lucy												0							9.0.0	0.56	0.1.0	0	0.56
Bates, Fleming	1					Yes					3	1	4	2	2		185.0.0	0.72	14.2.6	0.05	4.14.6	0.02	0.79
Moreland, John												1							136.0.0	0.36	114.0.8	0.3	0.66
Hansford, Thomas				1								1	2		1	1	70.0.0	0.27	130.2.0	0.51	0.11.3	0	0.78
Bates, James	2	parcel+1	1	2		1			2		5	8	21	11	8	2	830.0.0	0.83	33.0.0	0.03	5.14.0	0.01	0.87
Dedman, Philip		sundry		2					1			3	16	6	8	2	445.10.0	0.73	75.10.0	0.12	7.4.0	0.01	0.86
Howard, John	1		3	2		6			1		1	1	17	5	7	7	639.10.0	0.64	96.3.0	0.10	10.13.0	0.01	0.74
Ratcliff, William		parcel		3		1						7							50.15.0	0.41	18.2.9	0.15	0.56
Goodson, William	2				7	3			1		6	0							31.0.0	0.30	1.10.0	0.01	0.31
Stroud, Joseph				2		1			1		1	5							19.1.0	0.15	6.18.0	0.05	0.20
Ratcliff, William		3				2					2	17							20.0.0	0.38	2.12.0	0.05	0.43
Lutwidge, Mathew		parcel		4		1					1	3	1		1		18	0.31	0.0.0	0	1.13.0	0.03	0.34
Hunter, Samuel		9		5		7					1	10	1	1			20	0.31	3.10.0	0.05	0.0.0	0.00	0.36

Name	Location of Inventory @ Rockefeller Library in Williamsburg, VA
Bates, Mary	York County Wills and Inventories 23, 1783-1811
Miles, Mildred	York County Wills and Inventories 23, 1783-1811
Burcher, Lucy	York County Wills and Inventories 23, 1783-1811
Bates, Fleming	York County Wills and Inventories 23, 1783-1811
Moreland, John	York County Wills and Inventories 23, 1783-1811
Hansford, Thomas	York County Wills and Inventories 23, 1783-1811
Bates, James	York County Wills and Inventories 21, 1760-1771
Dedman, Philip	York County Wills and Inventories 21, 1760-1771
Howard, John	York County Wills and Inventories 21, 1760-1771
Patchitt, William	York County Wills and Inventories 23, 1783-1811
Goodson, William	York County Wills and Inventories 23, 1783-1811
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